

UNIT I: The Global Tapestry

from c. 1200 to c. 1450

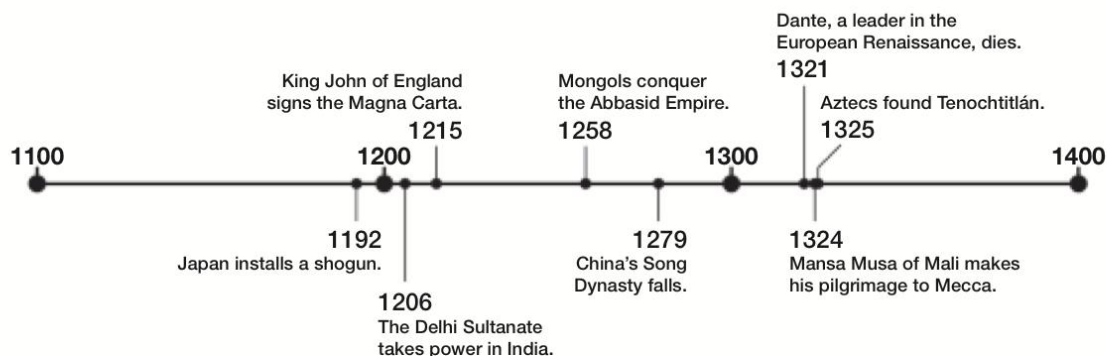
Understand the Context

Between 1200 and 1450, several large empires emerged around the world. Some were modified revivals of earlier empires in their region. Others represented new developments. All were shaped by the context of regional trade, which had been increasing since around 600.

The Revival of Large Empires Between 1200 and 1450, the wealthiest and most innovative empire in the world was the Song Dynasty in China. It was the latest in a series of states that had ruled a unified and prosperous China. Similarly, in Mesoamerica, the rise of the Aztec was influenced by an earlier empire under the Mayans. Two other centers of great intellectual achievement, Baghdad and Spain, reflected the emphasis on learning in the Islamic world.

However, in parts of Africa and Southeast Asia, the growth of regional trade produced larger and more complex states than had previously existed in those regions. Trade across the Sahara resulted in the West African empires of Ghana and Mali. Trade in the Indian Ocean provided the context for large states in Zimbabwe in East Africa and various states in India and Southeast Asia.

Unity in Central Eurasia Shaping the context for events throughout Eurasia between 1200 and 1450 was the remarkable emergence of the Mongols. A group of nomads from Central Asia, the Mongols conquered lands from central Europe to the Pacific Ocean, creating the largest land empire in human history. The conquest came with great devastation. However, the unity of so much territory under the rule of one group allowed trade to flourish once again across Eurasia, with new ideas and technology spreading easily. These developments set the stage for the intensifying global interactions that helped define the period after 1450.



Developments in East Asia

From now on, our ordinances will be properly enforced and the morality of our people will be restored.

—Ming Dynasty “Prohibition Ordinance” (1368–1644)

Essential Question: How did developments in China and the rest of East Asia between c. 1200 and c. 1450 reflect continuity, innovation, and diversity?

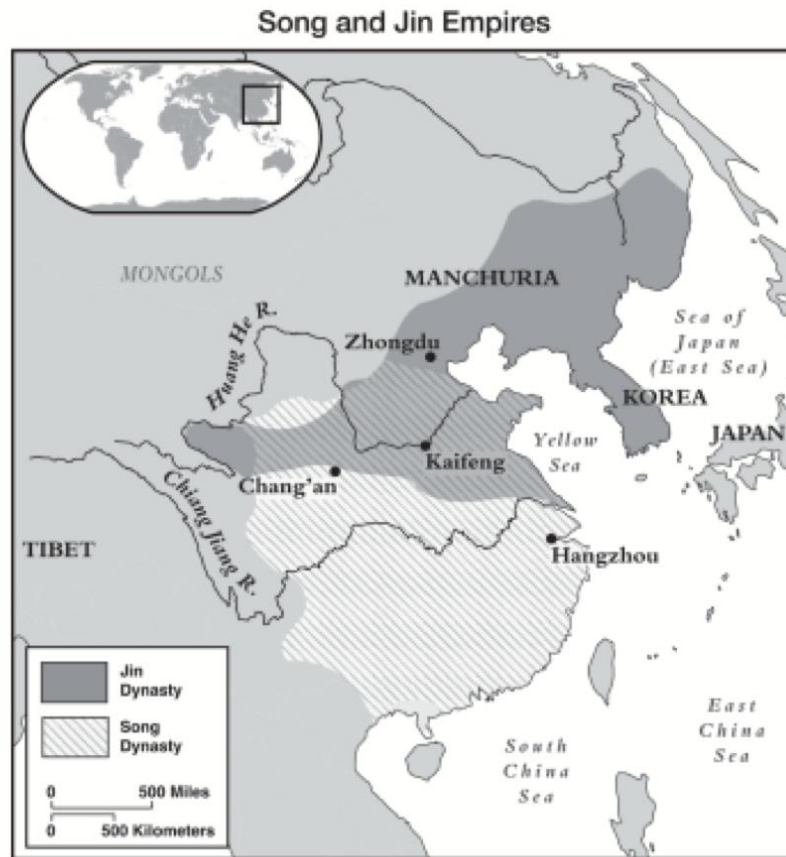
The Song Dynasty in China (960–1279) was the leading example of diversity and innovation in Afro-Eurasia and the Americas during the 13th century. China enjoyed great wealth, political stability, and fine artistic and intellectual achievements. Neo-Confucian teachings, illustrated in the above quotation, supported the government and shaped social classes and the family system. In addition, China developed the greatest manufacturing capability in the world. However, the spread of Confucianism and Buddhism might be the most enduring testimony to Chinese influence.

Government Developments in the Song Dynasty

The **Song Dynasty** replaced the Tang in 960 and ruled for more than three centuries. They lost control of northern lands to invading pastoralists from Manchuria who set up the Jin Empire. Although the Song ruled a smaller region than the Tang, their reign was prosperous and under them the arts flourished.

Bureaucracy China’s strength was partially the result of its **imperial bureaucracy**, a vast organization in which appointed officials carried out the empire’s policies. The bureaucracy had been a feature of Chinese government since the Qin dynasty (221 B.C.E.–207 B.C.E.). It represented a continuity across centuries and dynasties. Under the Song, China’s bureaucracy expanded. Early in the dynasty, this strengthened the dynasty.

Meritocracy and the Civil Service Exam One of Emperor Song Taizu’s great achievements was that he expanded the educational opportunities to young men of the lower economic classes so they could score well on the civil service exams. By scoring well, a young man could obtain a highly desired job in the bureaucracy. These exams were based on knowledge of Confucian texts. Because officials obtained their positions by demonstrating their merit on these exams, China’s bureaucratic system was known as a **meritocracy**. Though



the poor were vastly underrepresented in the bureaucracy, the Chinese system allowed for more upward mobility than any other hiring system of its time.

However, by the end of the Song, the bureaucracy had grown so large that it contributed to the empire's weakness. By creating so many jobs and by paying these officials so handsomely, the Song increased the costs of government to the point that they began drying up China's surplus wealth.

Economic Developments in Postclassical China

The flourishing Tang Dynasty had successfully promoted agricultural development, improved roads and canals, encouraged foreign trade, and spread technology. These accomplishments led to rapid prosperity and population growth during the Song Dynasty. The **Grand Canal** was an inexpensive and efficient internal waterway transportation system that extended over 30,000 miles. Expanding the canal enabled China, under the Song Dynasty, to become the most populous trading area in the world.

Gunpowder Although gunpowder had been invented in China in previous dynasties, innovators in the Song Dynasty made the first guns. Over centuries, the technology of making gunpowder and guns spread from China to all parts of Eurasia via traders on the Silk Roads.

Agricultural Productivity Some time before the 11th century, **Champa rice**, a fast-ripening and drought-resistant strain of rice from the Champa

Kingdom in present-day Vietnam, greatly expanded agricultural production in China. This rice and other strains developed through experimentation allowed farming to spread to lands where once rice could not grow, such as lowlands, riverbanks, and hills. In some areas, it also allowed farmers to grow two crops of rice per year, a summer crop and a winter crop.

Innovative methods of production contributed to agricultural success. For example, Chinese farmers put manure (both human and animal) on the fields to enrich the soil. They built elaborate irrigation systems using ditches, water wheels, pumps, and terraces to increase productivity. New heavy plows pulled by water buffalo or oxen allowed previously unusable land to be cultivated.

The combination of these changes in agriculture produced an abundance of food. As a result, China's population grew quickly. In the three centuries of Song Dynasty rule, China's population increased from around 25 percent of the total world population to nearly 40 percent.

Manufacturing and Trade Industrial production soared, as did China's population. China's discovery of "black earth"—coal—in the 4th century B.C.E. enabled it to produce greater amounts of cast iron goods. Though massive use of coal to power machines wouldn't happen until the 18th century, China did have the greatest manufacturing capability in the world. The Chinese later learned how to take the carbon out of cast iron and began to manufacture steel. They used steel to make or reinforce bridges, gates, and ship anchors. They also used steel to make religious items, such as pagodas and Buddhist figurines. Steel also strengthened the agricultural equipment, contributing to the abundance of food production as well.

Under the Song—and earlier than in Western Europe—China experienced **proto-industrialization**, a set of economic changes in which people in rural areas made more goods than they could sell. Unlike later industrialization, which featured large-scale production in factories using complex machinery, proto-industrialization relied more on home-based or community-based production using simple equipment. For example, **artisans**, or skilled craftworkers, produced steel and other products in widely dispersed smelting facilities under the supervision of the imperial government. Artisans also manufactured porcelain and silk that reached consumers through expanding trade networks, especially by sea. Porcelain was highly desired because it was light-weight yet strong. Further, it was light-colored, so it could be easily painted with elaborate designs.

The Chinese used the compass in maritime navigation, and they redesigned their ships to carry more cargo. China's ability to print paper navigation charts made seafaring possible in open waters, out of sight of land, and sailors became less reliant on the sky for direction.

China became the world's most commercialized society. Its economy changed from local consumption to market production, with porcelains, textiles, and tea the chief exports. The Grand Canal supported a vibrant internal trade while advances in naval technology allowed China to control trade in the South China Sea.

Taxes The Song also promoted the growth of a commercial economy by changing how they built public projects, such as roads and irrigation canals. Instead of requiring that people labor on these projects, the government paid people to work on them. This change increased the amount of money in circulation, promoting economic growth.

Tributes Another source of income for the government came from the tributary system, an arrangement in which other states had to pay money or provide goods to honor the Chinese emperor. This system cemented China's economic and political power over several foreign countries, but it also created stability and stimulated trade for all parties involved. The origins of the system existed in the Han Dynasty. By the time of the Song Dynasty, Japan, Korea, and kingdoms throughout southeast Asia were tributary states. The emperor expected representatives from tributary states to demonstrate their respect by performing a *kowtow*, a ritual in which anyone greeting the Chinese emperor must bow his or her head until it reached the floor. The Chinese sent out tremendous fleets led by Zheng He to demonstrate the power of the emperor and to receive tribute. (Zheng He's voyages are described in more detail in Topic 2.3.)

Social Structures in China

Through most of Chinese history, the majority of people lived in rural areas. However, urban areas grew in prominence in this productive period. At the height of the Song Dynasty, China was the most urbanized land in the world, boasting several cities containing more than 100,000 people. The largest cities, Chang'an (an ancient capital), Hangzhou (at the southern end of the Grand Canal), and the port city of Guangzhou were cosmopolitan metropolises—active centers of commerce with many entertainment options to offer.

China's Class Structure Though urbanization represented a significant development in China, life in rural areas grew more complex as well. The bureaucratic expansion created an entirely new social class, the **scholar gentry**. They soon outnumbered the aristocracy, which was comprised of landowners who inherited their wealth. The scholar gentry were educated in Confucian philosophy and became the most influential social class in China.

Three other classes ranked below the scholar gentry: farmers, artisans, and merchants. The low status of merchants reflected Confucian respect for hard work and creating value. The tasks of merchants did not require physical strength or endurance, and they simply exchanged goods without growing or making anything new.

Lower rungs of Chinese society included peasants who worked for wealthy landowners, often to pay off debts, and the urban poor. The Song government provided aid to the poor and established public hospitals where people could receive free care.

Role of Women Confucian traditions included both respect for women and the expectation that they would defer to men. This patriarchal pattern

strengthened during the Tang and Song dynasties. One distinctive constraint on women's activities in China was the practice of **foot binding**, which became common among aristocratic families during the Song Dynasty. From a very young age, girls had their feet wrapped so tightly that the bones did not grow naturally. A bound foot signified social status, something suitors particularly desired. It also restricted women's ability to move and hence to participate in the public sphere. Foot binding was finally banned in 1912.

Intellectual and Cultural Developments

During the Tang and Song eras, China enjoyed affluence, a well-educated populace, and extensive contact with foreign nations. As a result, intellectual pursuits (technology, literature, and visual arts) thrived.

Paper and Printing The Chinese had invented paper as early as the 2nd century C.E., and they developed a system of printing in the 7th century. They were the first culture to use **woodblock printing**. A Buddhist scripture produced in the 7th century is thought to be the world's first woodblock printed work. (For information on the Gutenberg press, a related technology, see Topic 1.6.) In the Song era, printed booklets on how to farm efficiently were distributed throughout rice-growing regions.

CHINESE WOODBLOCK PRINTING



Source: Thinkstock

With the development of woodblock printing in China, people could make multiple copies of art or written texts without laboriously copying each by hand.

Reading and Poetry The development of paper and printing expanded the availability of books. Though most peasants were illiterate, China's privileged classes had increased access to literature. Confucian scholars not only consumed literature at a tremendous rate, they were also the major producers of literature throughout the era. The Tang and Song dynasties' emphasis on schooling created generations of well-rounded scholar-bureaucrats. Later, Europeans with such diverse skills would be called "Renaissance men."

Religious Diversity in China

Buddhism had come to China from its birthplace in India via the Silk Roads. Its presence is evident during the anarchic period between the later Han and the Sui dynasties. However, its popularity became widespread during the Tang Dynasty. The 7th century Buddhist monk Xuanzang helped build Buddhism's popularity in China.

Buddhism and Daoism Three forms of Buddhism from India came to shape Asia, each developing a different emphasis:

- **Theravada Buddhism** focused on personal spiritual growth through silent meditation and self-discipline. It became strongest in Southeast Asia.
- **Mahayana Buddhism** focused on spiritual growth for all beings and on service. It became strongest in China and Korea.
- **Tibetan Buddhism** focused on chanting. It became strongest in Tibet.

All three include a belief in the Four Noble Truths, which stress the idea that personal suffering can be alleviated by eliminating cravings or desires and by following Buddhist precepts. All three also embrace the Eight-Fold Path, the precepts (including right speech, right livelihood, right effort, and right mindfulness) that can lead to enlightenment or nirvana.

Monks introduced Buddhism to the Chinese by relating its beliefs to Daoist principles. For example, Buddhism's idea of dharma became translated as dao ("the way"). Eventually, Buddhist doctrines combined with elements of Daoist traditions to create the **syncretic**, or fused, faith **Chan Buddhism**, also known as **Zen Buddhism**. Like Daoism, Zen Buddhism emphasized direct experience and meditation as opposed to formal learning based on studying scripture. Because of its fusion with Chinese beliefs, Buddhism became very popular in China. Monasteries—buildings where monks lived together—appeared in most major cities.

The presence of these monasteries became a problem for the Tang bureaucracy. Many leaders of the Tang Dynasty, which considered itself the "Middle Kingdom," had trouble accepting that a foreign religion would have such prominence in society. Buddhism's popularity, which drew individuals away from China's native religions, made Daoists and Confucians jealous. Despite monasteries' closures and land seizures, however, Chan Buddhism remained popular among ordinary Chinese citizens.

Buddhism and Neo-Confucianism The Song Dynasty was somewhat more friendly towards Buddhism, but it did not go out of its way to promote the religion. It preferred to emphasize China's native traditions, such as Confucianism. However, Buddhism had a strong presence and many Confucians began to adopt its ideals into their daily lives. The development of printing had made Buddhist scriptures widely available to the Confucian scholar gentry. The Song Dynasty benefited from the Confucian idea of **filial piety**, the duty of family members to subordinate their desires to those of the male head of the family and to the ruler. The emphasis on respect for one's elders helped the Song maintain their rule in China.

Neo-Confucianism evolved in China between 770 and 840. It was a syncretic system, combining rational thought with the more abstract ideas of Daoism and Buddhism. This new incarnation of Confucianism emphasized ethics rather than the mysteries of God and nature. It became immensely popular in the countries in China's orbit, including Japan, Korea, and Vietnam.

Comparing Japan, Korea, and Vietnam

An important dynamic in the histories of Japan, Korea, and Vietnam was each country's relationship with China. When China was unified, its political strength, economic wealth, religious traditions, intellectual advances, and technological innovations made the world's most powerful realm. Its smaller neighbors benefited from being so close to China but faced a challenge of maintaining their own distinctive cultures. Each had to confront the issue of sinification, or the assimilation of Chinese traditions and practices.

Japan

Since Japan was separated from China by a sea rather than land, it had more ability to control its interactions with China than Korea or Vietnam could. The impact of Chinese culture appeared in many aspects of life:

- Japan's Prince Shotoku Taishi (574–622) promoted Buddhism and Confucianism along with Japan's traditional Shinto religion. During this era, Japan learned how to do woodblock printing from China.
- During the **Heian period** (794–1185) Japan emulated Chinese traditions in politics, art, and literature.
- However, Japanese writers also moved in new directions. For example, in the 11th century, a Japanese writer composed the world's first novel, *The Tale of Genji*. It is the story of a Japanese prince and his life at court, particularly his many romances.

Feudalism For hundreds of years, Japan had been a feudal society without a centralized government. Landowning aristocrats, the *daimyo*, battled for control of land, while the majority of people worked as rice farmers.

Japanese feudalism was similar to European feudalism, which is described in Topic 1.6. Both featured very little social mobility, and both systems were built upon hereditary hierarchies. In Japan, peasants, known as serfs, were born into lives of economic dependency, while samurai were born into their roles as protectors and daimyo were born into lives of privilege. In Europe, the three groups were serfs, knights, and nobles.

What distinguishes Japanese feudalism from that of Europe was that the daimyo enjoyed much more power than the nobility in Europe did. The daimyo ruled over vast stretches of land and, in reality, were more powerful than either the emperor or the shogun. By contrast, Europe's hierarchy placed the monarch above the nobility. Though there were periods when authority of the monarch waned and power was distributed among nobility, the main centralized power structure of European feudalism would not change until the Modern Industrial Era.

In Europe, the ideal knight held to the code of chivalry, with duty to countrymen, duty to God, and duty to women, the last expressed through courtly love and the virtues of gentleness and graciousness. In Japan, the code was known as *bushido* and stressed frugality, loyalty, the martial arts, and honor unto death.

Japan also differed from China in how it was governed. China was ruled by an emperor who oversaw a large civilian bureaucracy. For much of its history, China had a central government strong enough to promote trade and peace. In contrast, when the Heian court declined, a powerful land-owning family, the Minamoto clan, took charge. In 1192, the Minamoto installed a shogun, or military ruler, to reign. Though Japan still had an emperor, he had little power. For the following four centuries, Japan suffered from regional rivalries among aristocrats. Not until the 17th century would shoguns create a strong central government that could unify the country. (Connect: In a paragraph, explain how Buddhism and Confucianism influenced the development of Chinese governments in the period from 1200 to 1450. See Prologue.)

Korea

Korea's location gave it a very direct relationship with China. The countries shared a land boundary, and China extended both the north and south of Korea.

Similarity to China Through its tributary relationship, Korea and China were in close contact. Thus, Korea emulated many aspects of China's politics and culture. It centralized its government in the style of the Chinese. Culturally, Koreans adopted both Confucian and Buddhist beliefs. The educated elite studied Confucian classics, while Buddhist doctrine attracted the peasant masses. Koreans adopted the Chinese writing system, which proved to be very awkward. The Chinese and Korean languages remained structurally very different. In the 15th century, Korea developed its own writing system.

Powerful Aristocracy One important difference between Korea and China was that the landed aristocracy were more powerful in Korea than in



China. As a result, the Korean elite were able to prevent certain Chinese reforms from ever being implemented. For example, though there was a Korean civil service examination, it was not open to peasants. Thus, there was no truly merit-based system for entering the bureaucracy.

Vietnam

Like Japan and Korea, Vietnam traded with and learned from China. For example, Vietnam adapted the Chinese writing system and architectural styles. However, Vietnam had a more adversarial relationship with China. At times, the Vietnamese launched violent rebellions against Chinese influence.

Gender and Social Structure Vietnamese culture differed from Chinese culture in several ways, which explains the strong resistance to Chinese power. For example, Vietnamese women enjoyed greater independence in their married lives than did Chinese women in the Confucian tradition. While the Chinese lived in extended families, the Vietnamese preferred **nuclear families** (just a wife, husband, and their children). Vietnamese villages operated independently of a national government; political centralization was nonexistent.

Although Vietnam adopted a merit-based bureaucracy of educated men, the Vietnamese system did not function like the Chinese scholar-bureaucracy. Instead of loyalty to the emperor, scholar-officials in Vietnam owed more allegiance to the village peasants. In fact, Vietnamese scholar-officials often led revolts against the government if they deemed it too oppressive. Vietnamese women resented their inferior status under the Chinese. In particular, they rejected the customs of foot binding and **polygyny**, the practice of having more than one wife at the same time. In spite of Vietnamese efforts to maintain the purity of their own culture, sinification did occur.

Military Conflict with China As the Tang Dynasty began to crumble in the 8th century, Vietnamese rebels pushed out China's occupying army. In their battles against the Chinese, they showed a strong capacity for guerilla warfare, perhaps due to their deep knowledge of their own land.

KEY TERMS BY THEME		
ECONOMICS: China Champa rice proto-industrialization artisans	GOVERNMENT: China Song Dynasty imperial bureaucracy meritocracy	Tibetan Buddhism syncretic Chan (Zen) Buddhism Neo-Confucianism
SOCIETY: China scholar gentry filial piety	TECHNOLOGY: China woodblock printing	GOVERNMENT: Japan Heian period
ENVIRONMENT: China Grand Canal	CULTURE: China foot binding Buddhism Theravada Buddhism Mahayana Buddhism	CULTURE: Vietnam nuclear families polygyny

THINK AS A HISTORIAN: CONTEXTUALIZE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS

To contextualize is to look at an event, development, or process in history within the situation, or context, in which it occurs. After you place events in context, you begin to see themes and patterns emerge in history. Historians use these themes and patterns to understand the interactions of laws, institutions, culture, events, and people.

For example, one way to understand the Song Dynasty's success from 960 to 1279 is to place its political, social, and economic development in the context of what came before and after it. In the context of what came before, the imperial bureaucracy represents a political continuity, since the bureaucratic system had been in place in earlier dynasties as well. However, its modification under the Song to allow more upward mobility represents a change. Similarly, considering the Song imperial bureaucracy in the economic context of what came after, you might gain insights into causation. That is, the cost of supporting the bureaucracy drained China of its wealth, which in turn helped create problems that led to the decline of the Song Dynasty. Contextualizing also promotes understanding of comparisons among different cultures and time periods.

Explain how the passage below provides context for the spread of Buddhism in China in light of other developments of the time.

In 629, a Chinese Buddhist monk named Xuanzang left China to go on a pilgrimage to India, the birthplace of Buddhism. He traveled west on the Silk Roads to Central Asia, then south and east to India, which he reached in 630. Along the way and in India he met many Buddhist monks and visited Buddhist shrines. In order to gain more insight into Buddhism, he studied for years in Buddhist monasteries and at Nalanda University in Bihar, India—a famous center of Buddhist knowledge. After 17 years away, Xuanzang finally returned to China, where people greeted him as a celebrity. He brought back many Buddhist texts, which he spent the rest of his life translating into Chinese. These writings were highly instrumental in the growth of Buddhist scholarship in China.

REFLECT ON THE TOPIC ESSENTIAL QUESTION

1. In one to three paragraphs, explain how developments in China and other parts of East Asia between c. 1200 and c. 1450 reflect continuity, innovation, and diversity.

Developments in Dar al-Islam

*Allah will admit those who embrace the true faith and do good works
to gardens watered by running streams.*

—The Quran, Chapter 47

Essential Question: In the period from c. 1200 to c. 1450, how did Islamic states arise, and how did major religious systems shape society?

After the death of **Muhammad** in 632, Islam spread rapidly outward from Arabia. Through military actions and the activities of merchants and missionaries, Islam's reach extended from India to Spain. As the quotation suggests, many Islamic leaders showed tolerance to Christians, Jews, and others who believed in a single god and did good works. Under the Abbasid Empire, scholars traveled from far away to Baghdad to study at a renowned center of learning known as the **House of Wisdom**. The Islamic community helped transfer knowledge throughout Afro-Eurasia. When the Abbasids declined, they were replaced by other Islamic states.

Invasions and Shifts in Trade Routes

In the 1100s and 1200s, the Abbasid Empire confronted many challenges. Like the Chinese, they had conflicts with nomadic groups in Central Asia. Unlike the Chinese, they also confronted European invaders.

Egyptian Mamluks Arabs often purchased enslaved people, or **Mamluks**, who were frequently ethnic Turks from Central Asia, to serve as soldiers and later as bureaucrats. Because of their roles, Mamluks had more opportunities for advancement than did most enslaved people. In Egypt, Mamluks seized control of the government, establishing the **Mamluk Sultanate** (1250–1517). They prospered by facilitating trade in cotton and sugar between the Islamic world and Europe. However, when the Portuguese and other Europeans developed new sea routes for trade, the Mamluks declined in power.

Seljuk Turks Another challenge to the Abbasids came from the Central Asian **Seljuk Turks**, who were also Muslims. Starting in the 11th century, they began conquering parts of the Middle East, eventually extending their power almost as far east as Western China. The Seljuk leader called himself **sultan**, thereby reducing the role of the highest-ranking Abbasid from caliph to chief Sunni religious authority.

Crusaders The Abbasids allowed Christians to travel easily to and from their holy sites in and around Jerusalem. However, the Seljuk Turks limited this travel. European Christians organized groups of soldiers, called **Crusaders**, to reopen access. (See Topic 1.6.)

Mongols The fourth group to attack the Abbasid Empire were among the most famous conquerors in history: the **Mongols**. (See Topic 2.2.) Like many Mamluks and the Seljuk Turks, they came from Central Asia. The Mongols conquered the remaining Abbasid Empire in 1258 and ended the Seljuk rule. They continued to push westward but were stopped in Egypt by the Mamluks.

Economic Competition Since the 8th century, the Abbasids had been an important link connecting Asia, Europe, and North Africa. Goods and ideas flowed from one region to another on trade routes controlled by the Abbasids. Many went through **Baghdad**. However, trade patterns slowly shifted to routes farther north. As Baghdad lost its traditional place at the center of trade, it lost wealth and population. It could not afford to keep its canals repaired. Farmers could not provide enough food for the urban population. Slowly, the infrastructure that had made Baghdad a great city fell into decay.

Cultural and Social Life

Over time, the Islamic world fragmented politically. Many of these new states adopted Abbasid practices, but they were distinct ethnically. The **Abbasid Caliphate** was led by Arabs and Persians, but the later Islamic states were shaped by Turkic peoples who descended from people in Central Asia. For example, the Mamluks in North Africa, the Seljuks in the Middle East, and the Delhi Sultanate in South Asia were all at least partially Turkic. By the 16th century, three large Islamic states had their roots in Turkic cultures: the Ottoman Empire in Turkey, the Safavid Empire in Persia, and the Mughal Empire in India. (See Topic 3.1)

However, these Islamic states continued to form a cultural region. Trade spread new goods and fresh ideas. The common use of shariah created similar legal systems. Great universities in Baghdad, Iraq; Córdoba, Spain; Cairo, Egypt; and Bukhara in Central Asia created centers for sharing intellectual innovations.

Cultural Continuities Islamic scholars followed the advice of the prophet Muhammad: “Go in quest of knowledge even unto China.” By learning from many cultures, they carried on the work of earlier thinkers:

- They translated Greek literary classics into Arabic, saving the works of Aristotle and other Greek thinkers from oblivion.
- They studied mathematics texts from India and transferred the knowledge to Europeans.
- They adopted techniques for paper-making from China. Through them, Europeans learned to make paper.

Cultural Innovations In addition to building on the intellectual achievements of other cultures, scholars during the “golden age” in Baghdad made their own achievements. **Nasir al-Din al-Tusi** (1201–1274) was one of the most celebrated Islamic scholars. He contributed to astronomy, law, logic, ethics, mathematics, philosophy, and medicine. An observatory built under his direction was the most advanced in the world and produced the most accurate astronomical charts. He studied the relationship between the lengths of the sides of a triangle and the angles. This laid the groundwork for making trigonometry a separate subject. Medical advances and hospital care improved in cities such as Cairo, while doctors and pharmacists studied for examinations for licenses that would allow them to practice.

Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406) was well known for his historical accounts and is widely acknowledged as a founder of the fields of historiography (the study of the methods of historians) and sociology.

Sufi poet and mystic **‘A’ishah al-Ba’uniyyah** (1460–1507) may be the most prolific female Muslim writer before the 20th century. Her best-known work, a long poem honoring Muhammad called “Clear Inspiration, on Praise of the Trusted One,” refers to many previous poets, reflecting her broad learning. Many of her works describe her journey toward mystical illumination.

‘A’ishah’s poetry reflects a contrast between most Muslims and Sufis. Unlike Muslims who focused on intellectual pursuits, such as the study of the Quran, **Sufis** emphasized introspection to grasp truths that they believed could not be understood through learning. Sufism may have begun as a mystical response to the perceived love of luxury by the early Umayyad Caliphate.

Sufi missionaries played an important role in the spread of Islam. They tended to adapt to local cultures and traditions, sometimes interweaving local religious elements into Islam, and in this way they won many converts.

Commerce, Class, and Diversity Helping to power the golden age of natural and moral philosophy and the arts was commerce. Islamic society viewed merchants as more prestigious than did other societies in Europe and Asia at the time. Muhammad himself had been a merchant, as had his first wife. With the revival of trade on Silk Roads, merchants could grow rich from their dealings across the Indian Ocean and Central Asia. They were esteemed as long as they maintained fair dealings and gave to charity in accord with the pillars of the Islamic faith. Some merchants were even sent out as missionaries.

In the non-Arab areas of Islamic expansion, control by Islamic caliphs led to discrimination against non-Arabs, though rarely to open persecution. This discrimination gradually faded in the 9th century. The caliph’s soldiers were forbidden to own territory they had conquered. The presence of a permanent military force that kept order but did not own property allowed life for most of the inhabitants of the countryside to remain virtually unchanged. However, people paid tribute to Islamic caliphs rather than to Byzantine rulers.

Slavery Although Islam allowed slavery, Muslims could not enslave other Muslims. Also exempt from slavery were Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians. (See Prologue.) Slaves were often imported from Africa, Kievan

Rus (present-day Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine), and Central Asia, but the institution of hereditary slavery had not developed. Many slaves converted to Islam, after which their owners freed them.

Slave women might find themselves serving as concubines to Islamic men who already had wed their allotment of four wives. Slave women were allowed more independence—for example, to go to markets and to run errands—than the legal wives. Only slave women were permitted to dance or perform musically before unrelated men. This opportunity to earn money sometimes enabled female slaves to accumulate enough to buy their freedom.

Free Women in Islam

Some practices now associated with Islam were common cultural customs in Central Asia and the Byzantine Empire before the time of Muhammad. For example, women often covered their heads and faces. This practice solidified under Islam, with most women observing *hijab*, a term that can refer either to the practice of dressing modestly or to a specific type of covering. Men often wore head coverings, from turbans to skull caps. While women could study and read, they were not to do so in the company of men not related to them.

Muhammad's Policies Muhammad raised the status of women in several ways. He treated his wives with love and devotion. He insisted that dowries, the payments prospective husbands made to secure brides, be paid to the future wife rather than to her father. He forbade female infanticide, the killing of newborn girls. Muhammad's first wife was educated and owned her own business, which set a pattern for the recognition of women's abilities.

The Status of Women Overall, Islamic women enjoyed a higher status than Christian or Jewish women. Islamic women were allowed to inherit property and retain ownership after marriage. They could remarry if widowed, and they could receive a cash settlement if divorced. Under some conditions, a wife could initiate divorce. Moreover, women could practice birth control. Islamic women who testified in a court under shariah (see Topic 3.3) were to be protected from retaliation, but their testimony was worth only half that of a man. One gap in the historical record is written evidence of how women viewed their position in society: most of the records created before 1450 were written by men.

The rise of towns and cities in Islamic-ruled areas resulted in new limitations on women's rights, just as it did in other cultures. The new status of women might best be symbolized by the veil and the harem, a dwelling set aside for wives, concubines, and the children of these women.

Islamic Rule in Spain

While the Umayyads ruled only briefly in the Middle East, they kept power longer in Spain. In 711, after Muslim forces had defeated Byzantine armies across North Africa, they successfully invaded Spain from the south. They designated Córdoba as their capital for Spain.



Battle of Tours The Islamic military was turned back in 732 when it lost the Battle of Tours against Frankish forces. This defeat, rare for Islamic armies during the 700s, marked the limit of rapid Islamic expansion into Western Europe. Most of the continent remained Christian, but Muslims ruled Spain for the next seven centuries. (Connect: In a paragraph, compare the status of women in Chinese society to the status of women in Islamic society in the period 1200 to 1450.)

Prosperity Under Islam Like the Abbasids in Baghdad, the Umayyad rulers in Córdoba created a climate of toleration, with Muslims, Christians, and Jews coexisting peacefully. They also promoted trade, allowing Chinese and Southeast Asian products to enter into Spain and thus into the rest of Europe. Many of the goods in this trade traveled aboard ships called dhows. These ships, first developed in India or China, had long, thin hulls that made them excellent for carrying goods, though less useful for conducting warfare.

Cultural and Scholarly Transfers The Islamic state in Spain, known as al-Andalus, became a center of learning. Córdoba had the largest library in the world at the time. Among the famous scholars from Spain was Ibn Rushd, known in Europe as Averroes (12th century). He wrote influential works on law, secular philosophy, and the natural sciences.

The Muslims, Christians, and Jews living in al-Andalus—all “people of the book” as Muslims regarded them—not only tolerated one another but also influenced one another. For example, Ibn Rushd’s commentaries on Aristotle influenced the Jewish philosopher Maimonides (c. 1135–c. 1204). Maimonides developed a synthesis of Aristotle’s reasoning and biblical interpretation. He, in turn, influenced Christian philosophers, including St. Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274). Islamic scholarship and scientific innovations, along with the knowledge transferred from India and China, laid the groundwork for the Renaissance and Scientific Revolution in Europe. For example, making paper, a technology developed in China and taught to Europeans by Muslims, was vital to spreading ideas in Europe.

KEY TERMS BY THEME		
GOVERNMENT: Empires Mamluk Sultanate Seljuk Turks sultan Mongols Abbasid Caliphate	CULTURE: Religion Mamluks Muhammad Crusaders Sufis	CULTURE: Golden Age House of Wisdom Baghdad Nasir al-Din al-Tusi 'A'ishah al-Ba'uniyyah

THINK AS A HISTORIAN: IDENTIFY HISTORICAL CONCEPTS,
DEVELOPMENTS, AND PROCESSES

Unit 1 is called “The Global Tapestry” to suggest that world history is a complex interweaving of different threads from different parts of the world at different times. However, to fully appreciate the whole, historians try to unravel the tapestry thread by thread to see just how each fits in. As they do, they use such *historical concepts* as change, continuity, perspective, cause and effect, significance, and empathy. Applying these concepts, they come to understand *historical developments*—patterns of changes or growth over time. To see these patterns, they look at subjects in historical context—how did they start out, and what did they become over time? Historians also try to understand the *historical processes* that made certain developments possible, such as migration, industrialization, conquest, and state building.

Practice identifying historical concepts, developments, and processes by completing the activities below.

1. Read the paragraph labeled **Economic Competition** on page 14. Explain the historical concept of cause and effect and how it applies to the decline of Baghdad.
2. Explain the historical concept of continuities and how Muhammad’s advice to “go in quest of knowledge even unto China” resulted in historical continuities. (See page 16.)
3. Explain the historical process of knowledge transfers that began with the Jews, Muslims, and Christians living in al-Andalus and laid the groundwork for the Scientific Revolution and Renaissance in Europe. (See page 19.)

REFLECT ON THE TOPIC ESSENTIAL QUESTION

1. In one to three paragraphs, explain how Islamic states arose and how major religious systems shaped society in the periods between c. 1200 and c. 1450.

Developments in South and Southeast Asia

*What the books taught me, I've practised.
What they didn't teach me, I've taught myself.
I've gone into the forest and wrestled with the lion.
I didn't get this far by teaching one thing and doing another.*

—Lal Ded (1320–1392)

Essential Question: How did various beliefs and practices in South and Southeast Asia affect society and the development of states?

The poetry of Lal Ded, known as Mother Lalla, illustrates a major cross-interaction between religious traditions that shaped the history of South and Southern Asia. She was born in Kashmir, a region of northern India. While a Hindu, her emphasis on experience appealed to many Muslims, particularly Sufis. The interaction of Hindus and Muslims, though sometimes violent, created dynamic developments in religious thought, politics, economics, art, and architecture. Despite the strong Islamic presence in the region, local Hindu kingdoms continued to play a major role in India's decentralized political landscape. A third religion, Buddhism, also had a strong presence in the area, particularly in the Sinhala dynasties in present-day Sri Lanka and the great kingdoms of Southeast Asia.

Political Structures in South Asia

South Asia was only occasionally united as a single state in its history. After the Gupta Dynasty that had dominated South Asia collapsed in 550, ending the so-called Golden Age or Classical Era of Indian history, disunity returned to the region for most of the next 1,000 years. Northern and southern India developed separate political structures. However, Hinduism provided some cultural unity throughout the region. Many people combined their own local faith tradition with adherence to the same scriptures and core beliefs respected throughout the region.

Political Structures in Southern India Southern India was more stable than northern India. The first kingdom, the Chola Dynasty, reigned over southern India for more than 400 years (850–1267). During the 11th century,

the dynasty extended its rule to Ceylon, the large island just south of India. (Today it is known as Sri Lanka.)

The second kingdom, the **Vijayanagara Empire** (1336–1646) took its name from the word for “the victorious city.” It began with the arrival of two brothers, Harihara and Bukka, from the Delhi Sultanate in north-central India. They were sent to the area because the Delhi Sultanate wished to extend its rule to southern India. These brothers had been born as Hindus and converted to Islam for the sake of upward mobility. When they left the region controlled by the Delhi Sultanate, they once again embraced the religion of their birth and established their own Hindu kingdom. The Vijayanagar Empire existed from the mid-1300s until the mid-1500s, when a group of Muslim kingdoms overthrew it.

Political Structures in Northern India Northern India experienced a great deal more upheaval than did southern India. After the fall of the Gupta Empire (see Prologue), the **Rajput kingdoms** gradually formed in northern India and present-day Pakistan. These were Hindu kingdoms led by leaders of numerous clans who were often at war with one another. Because of the competition among clans, no centralized government arose, once again demonstrating the diversity and the regionalism of South Asia. The lack of a centralized power left the kingdoms vulnerable to Muslim attacks.

While the Himalayas protected India from invasions from the north and east, mountain passes in the northwest allowed invasions by Muslim armies. Each attack disrupted a region that had been mostly Hindu and Buddhist. Over time, the Islamic presence in the region grew:

- In the 8th century, Islamic armies invaded what is today Pakistan. However, they brought little change to everyday life. Located on the eastern fringes of the Dar al-Islam, the region was isolated from the center of the culture. In addition, the Rajput princes skillfully wielded their power to limit the Muslim conquerors’ influence.
- In the 11th century, Islamic forces plundered northern India’s Hindu temples and Buddhist shrines for their riches. In addition, they erected mosques on Hindu and Buddhist holy sites—much to the anger of followers of those faiths.

In the early 13th century, Islamic forces managed to conquer the city of Delhi and much of the northern portion of South Asia. Bringing Islam into India, the **Delhi Sultanate** reigned for 300 years, from the 13th through the 16th centuries. The interaction of Islam and Hinduism in northern India dominated the political history of the era. While some Hindus converted to Islam, others resented Muslims and considered them foreigners. One factor contributing to this resentment was that the Delhi Sultanate imposed a tax, called the *jizya*, on all non-Muslim subjects of the empire.

Throughout its reign, the Delhi Sultanate never organized an efficient bureaucracy in the style of the Chinese. For this reason, sultans had difficulty imposing their policies in a land as vast and diverse as India. Despite the

strong Islamic presence in the region, local kingdoms continued to play a major role in India's decentralized political landscape.

The sultans wanted to extend their rule southward. Before they succeeded, though, they became focused on defending themselves from an onslaught by the Mongol army from the northwest. The Delhi Sultanate prevented the Mongols themselves from conquering South Asia. However, in 1526, the sultans lost power to a new empire, the Mughals, whose leaders did trace their ancestry to the Mongols.

Religion in South Asia

Religion always held a dominant place in South Asian history. Before the arrival of Islam, most South Asians practiced Hinduism, while a smaller number identified themselves as Buddhists. South Asians encountered a starkly different religion when Islam arrived.

- Hindus pray to many gods, while Islam is strictly monotheistic.
- Hindu temples and artwork are replete with pictures of deities, while Muslims disapprove of any visual representation of Allah.
- Hinduism was associated with a hierarchical caste system, while Islam has always called for the equality of all believers.
- Hindus recognize several sacred texts, while Muslims look to only the Quran for spiritual guidance.

The Arrival of Islam The relationship between Hindus and Muslims shaped the history of South Asia beginning in the 7th century, and it continues to shape regional culture and politics today. Islam initially entered India forcefully yet eventually took on a more peaceful approach. But while Islam was a universalizing religion, one that wanted to **proselytize**, or actively seek converts, Muslim rulers found early in their reign that forcing their Hindu and Buddhist subjects to convert was not successful. Thus, most converts came to Islam voluntarily. Many Muslim merchants in the Indian Ocean trade moved to Indian port cities and married. Their wives often ended up converting to their husband's religion.

With its emphasis on the equality of all believers, Islam also attracted low-caste Hindus who hoped that conversion would improve their social status. In this sense, Islam in India was like Christianity in the Roman Empire. Both appealed to the people who suffered the most under the existing social structure.

The largest numbers of converts to Islam, however, were Buddhists. Corruption among the monks and raids on monasteries by early Muslim conquerors left the Buddhist religion disorganized. The spread of Islam helped make Buddhism a minority religion in its place of birth. (Connect: Make an outline comparing the spread of Islam in South Asia to the spread of Buddhism in China. See Topic 1.1.)

Social Structures in South Asia

The arrival of Islam did little to alter the basic structure of society in South Asia. India's caste system is its strongest historical continuity. While obviously inequitable, it lent stability to a politically decentralized land. The caste system was flexible and able to accommodate newcomers. Muslim merchants and migrants, even though they were not Hindu, found a place for themselves within the caste hierarchy based on their occupation. These subcastes based on occupation operated like workers' guilds, soon becoming absorbed into the social fabric of Indian society. Connect: Write a paragraph comparing the caste system in South Asia to the social structures in China in the period from 1200 to 1450. See Topic 1.1.)

At the same time, most of those who tried to escape the grip of the caste system failed. The low-caste Hindus who converted to Islam as a way to improve their social status usually did not achieve that goal. Individuals required more education and opportunities for better jobs, not just a new religion, to help them escape their low status in life.

As Islam spread, Muslims varied how they applied its core teachings, depending on their culture before converting. For example, Islam did not alter gender relations greatly. In South Asia, women in the Hindu tradition were confined to a separate social sphere, and Islamic women received similar treatment. In Southeast Asia, women enjoyed more independence before the arrival of Islam. This pattern continued as people became Muslims. Thus, converts in South and Southeast Asia found ways to accommodate a new faith, but most people did not reject their traditions in the process.

Cultural Interactions in South Asia

People in South Asia and the Middle East shared their intellectual and cultural achievements with each other. For example, Arab astronomers and mathematicians added to the body of knowledge begun by their Indian counterparts. Indian developments in algebra and geometry were translated into Arabic, and spread throughout Dar al-Islam. One result of this movement of ideas was that the numeral system referred to in the West as "Arabic numerals," actually originated in India.

In India itself, sultans erected buildings melding the intricate artistic details of Hindu art with the geometric patterns preferred by Islamic architecture. The city of Delhi is filled with examples of Islamic architecture built during the Delhi Sultanate. One famous example, the **Qutub Minar**, stands in the southern part of the city. Rulers from the Delhi Sultanate built an elaborate mosque on top of a Hindu temple and used materials for the mosque from nearby Hindu and other religious shrines. Towering over the mosque is the Qutub Minar itself, a gigantic leaning tower, the tallest structure in India today. Historians debate the reason for its construction; one obvious function is its presence as a symbol of Islamic influence and, at one time, dominance of northern India.

An entirely new language developed among Muslims of South Asia: **Urdu**. Urdu melded the grammatical pattern of Hindi (the language of Northern Indians), and with the vocabulary of Arabic and some elements of Farsi (the language of Persians). Today, Urdu is the official language of Pakistan.

The Bhakti Movement Beginning in the 12th century, some Hindus began to draw upon traditional teachings about the importance of emotion in their spiritual life. Rather than emphasize studying texts or performing rituals, they focused on developing a strong attachment to a particular deity. This development, known as the **Bhakti Movement**, started in southern India. It was especially appealing to many believers because it did not discriminate against women or people of low social status. For example, one of the most famous figures of the Bhakti Movement would be a female, the poet Mira Bai, who lived in the 16th century.

Though the bhaktis were Hindus, they were similar in some ways to Sufi Muslims. Both groups were mystical movements, ones that emphasized inner reflection in order to achieve a direct personal relationship with a deity. Because they placed less emphasis on strict adherence to traditional rituals and beliefs, bhaktis and Sufis each appealed to people outside their traditions. Just as the Sufis helped spread Islam, the Bhaktis helped spread Hinduism.



Source: Thinkstock

Religious structures in India often demonstrate syncretism in architecture. Qutub Minar combines towers common in Hindu temples with domes common in Islamic mosques.

Southeast Asia

Like China, South Asia strongly influenced its neighbors, particularly the lands of Southeast Asia—today’s Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia, Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam. Indian merchants had contact with these Southeast Asian lands as early as 500 B.C.E. The merchants sold gold, silver, metal goods, and textiles in the region and brought back its fine spices. Trade voyages introduced the Indian religions of Hinduism and Buddhism to Southeast Asia. Much of the region became and remains today mostly Buddhist. The region, like Southwest Asia, was strategically significant. Whoever controlled this region could influence the valuable trade between South Asia and East Asia.

Sea-Based Kingdoms Because Southeast Asia was so important, several kingdoms emerged there. Two were particularly long-lasting:

- The **Srivijaya Empire** (670–1025) was a Hindu kingdom based on Sumatra. It built up its navy and prospered by charging fees for ships traveling between India and China.
- The **Majapahit Kingdom** (1293–1520) based on Java had 98 tributaries at its height. Like Srivijaya, Majapahit sustained its power by controlling sea routes. Unlike Srivijaya, Majapahit was Buddhist.

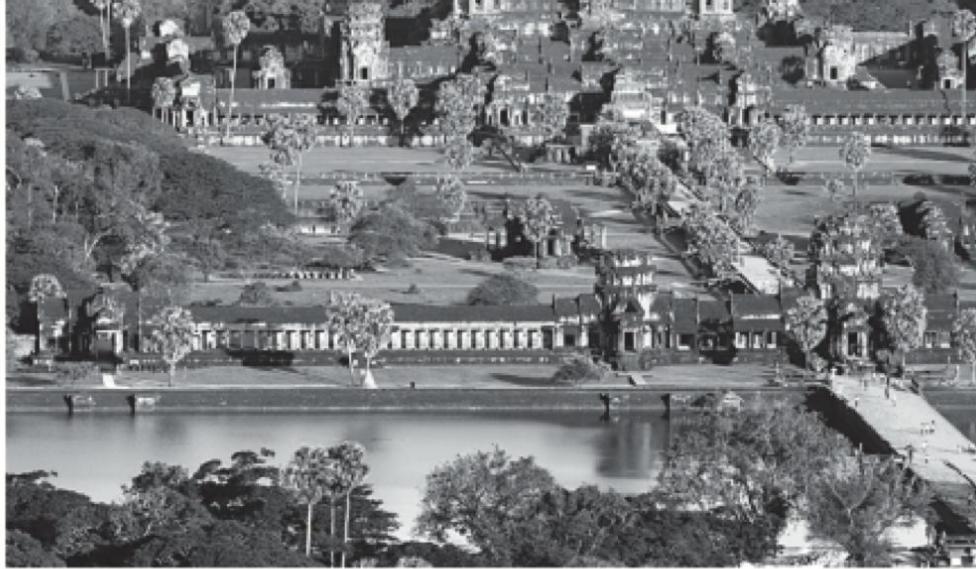
Land-Based Kingdoms Other kingdoms in Southeast Asia drew power from their control over land. The **Sinhala dynasties** in Sri Lanka had their roots in the arrival of early immigrants, most likely merchants, from north India. Buddhists arrived in the 3rd century B.C.E. and the island became a center of Buddhist study. Monasteries and nunneries flourished. Both men and women found a life of contemplation and simple living attractive.

Buddhism was so deeply embedded that Buddhist priests often served as advisors to the monarchs. The government of one of the kingdoms oversaw the construction of a network of reservoirs and canals to create an excellent irrigation system, which contributed to economic growth. However, attacks by invaders from India and conflicts between the monarchy and the priests ultimately weakened the kingdoms.

The **Khmer Empire**, also known as the Angkor Kingdom (802–1431), was situated near the Mekong River and also did not depend on maritime prowess for its power. The kingdom’s complex irrigation and drainage systems led to economic prosperity, making it one of the most prosperous kingdoms in Southeast Asia. Irrigation allowed farmers to harvest rice crops several times a year, and drainage systems reduced the impact of the heavy monsoon rains.

The Khmer capital was at Angkor Thom. The temples there showed the variety of Indian cultural influences on Southeast Asia. Hindu artwork and sculptures of deities abounded. But at some point the Khmer rulers became Buddhist. Starting in the 12th and 13th centuries, they added Buddhist sculptures and artwork to the temples without destroying any of the Hindu artwork.

During the same period and only one-half mile from Angkor Thom, rulers constructed the ornate and majestic Buddhist temple complex of Angkor Wat. In 1431, the Thais of the **Sukhothai Kingdom** invaded the area, forcing the Khmers out. Nevertheless, ruins of the magnificent structures in Angkor Thom and Angkor Wat still stand, testifying not only to the sophistication of Southeast Asian culture but also to the powerful influence of Indian culture on the region.



Source: Rajasthani Painting of Meerabai. https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Meera_Bai#/media/File:Meerabai.jpg.

The great temple complex at Angkor Wat, in both its architecture and its use, reflects the interaction between Hinduism and Buddhism in Southeast Asia.

Islam Islam's movement into the Indian Ocean region paralleled its expansion elsewhere. The first Southeast Asian Muslims were local merchants, who converted in the 700s, hoping to have better trading relations with the Islamic merchants who arrived on their shores. Islam was most popular in urban areas at the time. Islam spread to Sumatra, Java, and the Malay Peninsula. Today, Indonesia includes more Muslims than any other country.

Sufis Sufis also did missionary work in Southeast Asia. (See Topic 1.2.) Because of their tolerance for local faiths, people felt comfortable converting to Islam. They could be Muslims and still honor local deities.

KEY TERMS BY THEME

GOVERNMENT: South Asia

Vijayanagara Empire (Southern India)
Rajput kingdoms (North India)
Delhi Sultanate

GOVERNMENT: Southeast Asia

Srivijaya Empire (Sumatra)
Majahapit Kingdom (Java)
Sinhala dynasties (Sri Lanka)
Khmer Empire (Cambodia)
Sukhothai Kingdom (Thailand)

CULTURE: Religion

proselytize
Bhakti Movement

CULTURE: Blending

Qutub Minar
Urdu

THINK AS A HISTORIAN: IDENTIFY CLAIMS

A claim is a statement asserted to be true. It differs from provable fact, such as “Baghdad was the largest city in the Abbasid Empire” or simple preference, such as “World history is more interesting than algebra.” Instead, in modern scholarship, a claim expresses a viewpoint with which thoughtful people can reasonably disagree. It forms the basis of an *argument*—reasoning backed up with evidence.

A claim is often a somewhat general statement that reflects a judgment shaped by the point of view of the writer. In some historical texts with a clear bias, the claim may simply be the author’s main idea, and it may be based more on opinion or overgeneralization than rigorous reasoning. In modern scholarship, however, claims should be grounded in facts and informed opinions. While claims are general, the evidence used to support them should be specific.

Reread the excerpt by the Muslim scholar Al-Beruni on page 30. Determine which sentence below best expresses his claim by looking for the most general statement. Then explain whether the claim is based on informed opinions or overgeneralizations.

1. [Hindus] are haughty, foolishly vain, self-conceited, and stolid.
2. The Hindus believe that there is no country but theirs, no nation like theirs, no kings like theirs, no religion like theirs, no science like theirs.
3. The present generation of Hindus is narrow-minded.
4. If you tell them of any science or scholar in Khorasan and Persia, they will think you to be both an ignoramus and a liar.

REFLECT ON THE CHAPTER ESSENTIAL QUESTION

1. In one to three paragraphs, explain how various beliefs and practices in South and Southeast Asia affected society and the development of states.

Developments in the Americas

*I love the song of the mockingbird,
Bird of four hundred voices,
I love the color of jade
And the intoxicating scent of flowers,
But more than all I love my brother, man!*

—Nezahualcoyotl (1402–1472), Aztec poet

Essential Question: What states developed in the Americas, and how did they change over time?

Following the decline of the Olmecs in Mesoamerica and the Chavin in the Andes, new civilizations, such as the Mayans, the Aztecs, and the Incas rose in the same regions. In addition, the first large-scale civilization in North America developed. As in Afro-Eurasia, several of these civilizations developed strong states, large urban centers, and complex belief systems. Current knowledge about these civilizations combines archaeological evidence, oral traditions, and writings by Europeans who came to the Americas after 1492. One poem recorded by the Spanish was the one above from an Aztec writer.

The Mississippian Culture

The first large-scale civilization in North America emerged in the 700s or 800s in what is now the eastern United States. Since it started in the Mississippi River Valley, it is known as the **Mississippian** culture. While other cultures built monumental buildings, Mississippians built enormous earthen mounds, some of which were as tall as 100 feet and covered an area the size of 12 football fields. The largest of these mounds is **Cahokia**, located in southern Illinois.

Government and Society The Mississippian society had a rigid class structure. A chief called the Great Sun ruled each large town. Below the Great Sun was an upper class of priests and nobles and a lower class of farmers, hunters, merchants, and artisans. At the bottom were slaves, who usually were prisoners of war. In general, women farmed and men hunted. The Mississippians had a **matrilineal society**, which means that social standing was determined by the woman's side of the family. For example, when the Great Sun died, the title passed not to his own son, but to a sister's son.

The Decline of Mississippian Civilization People abandoned Cahokia around 1450, and other large Mississippian cities by 1600. Historians disagree on why the Mississippian people moved. One theory posits that flooding or other weather extremes caused crop failures and the collapse of the agricultural economy needed to sustain the populations of the large cities. Another theory suggests that diseases introduced by the Europeans decimated the population.

Chaco and Mesa Verde

Soon after the rise of the Mississippian Civilization, various cultures emerged in what is now the southwestern United States. Living in a dry region, people developed ways to collect, transport, and store water efficiently. In addition, because of the climate, trees were small and scarce, so people had little wood to use to build homes. Two cultures became well-known for their innovations:

- The Chaco built large housing structures using stones and clay, some of which included hundreds of rooms.
- The people of Mesa Verde built multi-story homes into the sides of cliffs using bricks made of sandstone.

Both groups declined in the late 13th century as the climate became drier.

The Maya City-States

Mayan civilization reached its height between 250 and 900 C.E. Mayans stretched over the southern part of Mexico and much of what is now Belize, Honduras, and Guatemala. Most lived in or near one of the approximately 40 cities that ranged in size from 5,000 to 50,000 people. At its peak, as many as 2 million Mayans populated the region.

Mayan Government The main form of Mayan government was the **city-state**, each ruled by a king and consisting of a city and its surrounding territory. Most rulers were men. However, when no male heir was available or old enough to govern, Mayan women ruled. Wars between city-states were common. At times, city-states were overthrown. However, Mayans rarely fought to control territory. More often they fought to gain tribute—payments from the conquered to the conqueror—and captives to be used as **human sacrifices** during religious ceremonies.

Each Mayan king claimed to be descended from a god. The Mayans believed that when the king died, he would become one with his ancestor-god. The king directed the activities of the elite scribes and priests who administered the affairs of the state. Royal rule usually passed from father to son, but kings who lost the support of the people were sometimes overthrown. The common people were required to pay taxes, usually in the form of crops, and to provide labor to the government. City-states had no standing armies, so when war erupted, governments required citizens to provide military service. No central government ruled all Mayan lands, although often one city-state was the strongest in a region and would dominate its neighbors.

Mayan Religion, Science, and Technology The Mayans were innovative thinkers and inventors. For example, they incorporated the concept of zero into their number system, developed a complex writing system, and learned to make rubber out of liquid collected from rubber plants.

Mayan science and religion were linked through astronomy. Based on the calendar, priests decided when to celebrate religious ceremonies and whether to go to war. As a result, keeping an accurate calendar was very important. Although the Mayans had no telescopes, they made very precise observatories atop pyramids such as the one at Chichen Itza. Their observations enabled priests to design a calendar more accurate than any used in Europe at the time.

One task of priests, who could be either male or female, was to conduct ceremonies honoring many deities. Among the most important deities were those of the sun, rain, and corn. Mayans made offerings to the gods so prayers might be answered. War captives were sometimes killed as offerings. (Connect: Compare the political structures of the Mayans with the political structures of South Asia. See Topic 1.3.)



Source: Thinkstock

Mayan pyramids, with steps going up the side, were similar to Mesopotamian ziggurats. Similarly shaped architecture can be found from Spain and Algeria to China and Indonesia.

The Aztecs

The Aztecs, also known as the **Mexicas**, were originally hunter-gatherers who migrated to central Mexico from the north in the 1200s. In 1325, they founded their capital Tenochtitlán on the site of what is now Mexico City. Over the next 100 years, they conquered the surrounding peoples and created an empire that stretched from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean.

Capital City The Aztecs located Tenochtitlán on an island in the middle of a swampy lake in order to protect it from attacks. Tenochtitlán grew to almost 200,000 people, making it one of the largest cities in the world. To provide water for the city, they built a network of aqueducts. At the center of the city, the Aztecs built a pyramid that rose 150 feet into the air. This Great Pyramid and other pyramids, temples, and palaces were made of stone. On Lake Texcoco, the Aztecs built floating gardens called *chinampas* to increase the amount of space for food production. The Aztecs dug ditches to use lake water to irrigate their fields and to drain parts of the lake for more land.



Source: DEQ/G DAGLIORTI/ Granger, NYC

The construction of chinampas in Mesoamerica was one way people expanded the land on which to grow crops.

Government, Economy, and Society As the Aztecs conquered much of Mesoamerica, they developed a tribute system that insured their dominance. Conquered people were forced to pay tribute, surrender lands, and perform military service. Tribute included practical goods such as food, cloth, and firewood, as well as luxury items such as feathers, beads, and jewelry. The Aztecs allowed local rulers to stay in their positions to serve as tribute collectors. This allowed Aztec political dominance without direct administrative control. In exchange, the conquered people were extended Aztec protection.

To administer the empire, the Aztecs grouped city-states into provinces. They moved warriors and their families to each province's capital to make sure the province remained under Aztec control. In addition, an Aztec official was stationed in each capital to collect tribute from local officials.

Aztec government was a **theocracy**, which is rule by religious leaders. At the top was the emperor, known as the Great Speaker, who was the political ruler as well as a divine representative of the gods. Next in the social hierarchy were land-owning nobles, who also formed the majority of Aztec military leadership. Next in rank were scribes and healers, followed by craftspeople and traders. A special merchant class called *pochteca* traded in luxury goods. Below the traders were the peasants and soldiers. Aztec people could be enslaved as well, usually because they did not pay their debts or were being punished for crimes. Besides being used for labor, enslaved people were also offered up as sacrifices in religious ceremonies.

Religion The intricate and complex religion of the Aztecs was central to their society. They worshipped an ever-evolving pantheon of hundreds of deities, many of whom were considered to have both male and female aspects.

Worship among the Aztecs involved a great many rituals and feast days as well as human sacrifices. The Aztecs believed that the gods had sacrificed themselves in order to create the world—thus human sacrifice and blood-letting was a sort of repayment and atonement for human sin. Human sacrifice probably had a political component, in the sense that it demonstrated the great might of the Aztec Empire in dramatic fashion. The number of human sacrifices may never be known. Much of the information about Aztec society comes from Spanish invaders, who may have exaggerated the extent of human sacrifice in order to make the Aztecs seem more deserving of conquest.

Role of Women Women played an important role in the Aztec tribute system since they wove the valuable cloth that local rulers demanded as part of the regular tribute. As the demand for cloth tribute increased, an Aztec husband might obtain more than one wife in order to be able to pay the tribute. While most Aztec women worked in their homes, some became priestesses, midwives, healers, or merchants. A few noblewomen worked as scribes to female members of royal families. Therefore, at least these few women knew how to read and write.

The Decline of the Aztecs By the late 15th century, the Aztec Empire was in decline. The Aztecs' comparatively low level of technology—such as the lack of wheeled vehicles and pack animals—meant that agriculture was arduous and inefficient. The Aztecs' commitment to military victory and the constant desire for more human sacrifices induced the leadership to expand the empire beyond what it could reasonably govern. Finally, the extraction from conquered people of tribute and sacrifice victims inspired more resentment than loyalty. Because of this resentment, many tribes ruled by the Aztecs were ready to rebel if they thought they had an opportunity to succeed. This opportunity would come later, when Spaniards arrived in 1519.

The Inca

In 1438, a tribal leader who called himself **Pachacuti**, which means “transformer” or “shaker” of the earth, began conquering the tribes living near what is now Cuzco, Peru. His military victories, followed by those of his son, combined the small tribes into a full-fledged state, the **Incan Empire**. It extended from present-day Ecuador in the north to Chile in the south. By 1493, Pachacuti's grandson, Huayna Capac, ruled the empire. He focused on consolidating and managing the many lands conquered by his predecessors.

Government, Economy, and Society In order to rule the extensive territory efficiently, the Incan Empire was split into four provinces, each with its own governor and bureaucracy. Conquered leaders who demonstrated loyalty to the empire were rewarded. In contrast to the people living under the Aztecs, conquered people under the Inca did not have to pay tribute. Rather, they were subject to the **mit'a system**, mandatory public service. Men between the ages of 15 and 50 provided agricultural and other forms of labor, including the construction of roads.

Religion The name Inca means “people of the sun,” and Inti, the sun god, was the most important of the Incan gods. Inca rulers were considered to be Inti’s representative on the earth. As the center of two critical elements in Incan religion—honoring of the sun and royal ancestor veneration—the **Temple of the Sun** in Cuzco formed the core of Incan religion.

Royal ancestor veneration was a practice intended to extend the rule of a leader. Dead rulers were mummified and continued to “rule” as they had in life and were thought to retain ownership of their servants, possessions, and property. Thus, Incan rulers could not expect to inherit land or property upon assuming power. This practice was a partial motivator for the constant expansion of the empire.

Priests were consulted before important actions. To the Inca, the gods controlled all things, and priests could determine the gods’ will by studying the arrangement of coca leaves in a dish or by watching the movement of a spider. Priests diagnosed illnesses, predicted the outcome of battles, solved crimes, and determined what sacrifices should be made to which god. Serious events such as famines, plagues, and defeat in war called for human sacrifices—although scholars do not believe that human sacrifice was practiced with the same frequency as it probably was with the Aztecs.

Inca religion included some **animism**—the belief that elements of the physical world could have supernatural powers. Called *huaca*, they could be large geographical features such as a river or a mountain peak. Or, they could be very small objects such as a stone, a plant, or a built object, such as a bridge.

Achievements In mathematics, the Inca developed the *quipu*, a system of knotted strings used to record numerical information for trade and engineering and for recording messages to be carried throughout the empire. In agriculture, the Inca developed sophisticated terrace systems for the cultivation of crops such as potatoes and maize. The terraces utilized a technique called *waru waru*, raised beds with channels that captured and redirected rain to avoid erosion during floods and that stored water to be used during dry periods.

The Inca were especially good builders of bridges and roads. Using captive labor, they constructed a massive roadway system called the **Carpa Nan**, with some 25,000 miles of roads used mainly by the government and military. In a mountainous region, bridges were particularly important.

Decline Upon the arrival of Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro in 1532, the Incan Empire was in the midst of a civil war of succession after the death of emperor Huayna Capac. Some scholars believe that the civil war weakened the Incan army, making it easier for Pizarro’s forces to prevail. Others believe that other factors such as diseases introduced by the Europeans led to the decline. In 1533, the Spanish conquered the core of the empire, although outposts held out until 1572. Today, the Inca ruins at Machu Picchu are one of the most-visited sites in the world.

Continuities and Diversity

Historians have debated how closely Mesoamerican cultures are related to one another. Many argue that most are based on the Olmec civilization, since many later cultures adopted some of its features. For example, the Olmecs' feathered snake-god became fundamental in both the Mayan and Aztec religion. The subjects depicted on Olmec pottery have been found in pottery in other civilizations. The Olmecs' ritual sacrifices, pyramids, and ball courts were also continued in other cultures. Other historians argue that different cultures developed complex civilizations more or less independently.

Comparing Three American Civilizations			
	Maya	Aztec	Inca
Region	Mexico/Central America	Central Mexico	Andes in South America
Period	400–1517	1200–1521	1200–1533
Crops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corn • Beans • Squash 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corn • Beans • Squash • Tomatoes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corn • Cotton • Potatoes
Trade	• Moderate	• Extensive	• Limited
Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polytheistic • Some human sacrifice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polytheistic • Some human sacrifice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polytheistic • Some human sacrifice
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organized city-states, each with a king • Wars for tribute 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Powerful king • Wars for captives • System of tribute 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Powerful king • Wars for conquest • Mit'a system
Technology and Thought	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing • Step pyramids • Accurate calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step pyramids • Chinampas • Accurate calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waru waru • Roads • Masonry
Reasons for Decline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drought • Deforestation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European diseases • Subjects rebelled • Spanish attacks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European diseases • Civil war • Spanish attacks

KEY TERMS BY THEME		
CULTURE: North America Mississippian matrilineal society TECHNOLOGY: Mound-Building Cahokia CULTURE: Mayan city-states	GOVERNMENT: Aztec Mexico theocracy RELIGION: Aztec human sacrifice	GOVERNMENT: Inca Pachacuti Incan Empire mit'a system TECHNOLOGY: Inca Carpa Nan RELIGION: Inca Temple of the Sun animism

THINK AS A HISTORIAN: IDENTIFY EVIDENCE



Source: Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (neg. no. LC-USZC4-743)

The image to the left is an illustration from a reproduction of the 16th century Codex Magliabecchi, a primary source. The artist is depicting an Aztec sacrifice ritual that offers a human heart to the war god Huitzilopochtli.

Primary sources are those created during the historic period to which they refer. They are the first records of the subject being described and include first-hand or eyewitness reports. Secondary sources, in contrast, are those that analyze primary sources or other secondary sources to draw conclusions on a subject. Historians use both kinds of sources as evidence to support their arguments.

The Codex Magliabecchi from which the above illustration is taken is an ancient manuscript that offers historians a primary source with possible evidence about Aztec society. If you were developing an argument about the Aztec population's attitude toward human sacrifice, what evidence might you use from this illustration, and what argument might it support?

REFLECT ON THE TOPIC ESSENTIAL QUESTION

1. In one to three paragraphs, identify the states that developed in the Americas and explain how they changed over time.

Developments In Africa

After that the chief of the poets mounts the steps of the pempi [a raised platform on which the ruler sits] and lays his head on the sultan's lap, then climbs to the top of the pempi and lays his head first on the sultan's right shoulder and then on his left, speaking all the while in their tongue, and finally he comes down again. I was told that this practice is a very old custom amongst them, prior to the introduction of Islam, and that they have kept it up.

—Ibn Battuta, c. 1352

Essential Question: How and why did states develop in Africa and change over time?

Ibn Battuta's commentary on Mali society sheds light on the cultural forces at work in Sub-Saharan Africa during the 14th century. A scholar from Morocco on the northwest coast of Africa, he was well versed in Islamic law, also known as shariah. Islamic governments in Mogadishu (east Africa) and Delhi (India) sought his advice and welcomed him to their lands. Ibn Battuta's travelogue demonstrated how Islam's phenomenal growth increased connections among cultures of Asia, Africa, and southern Europe. As Ibn Battuta's account makes clear, African societies that had adopted Islam kept many of their traditions.

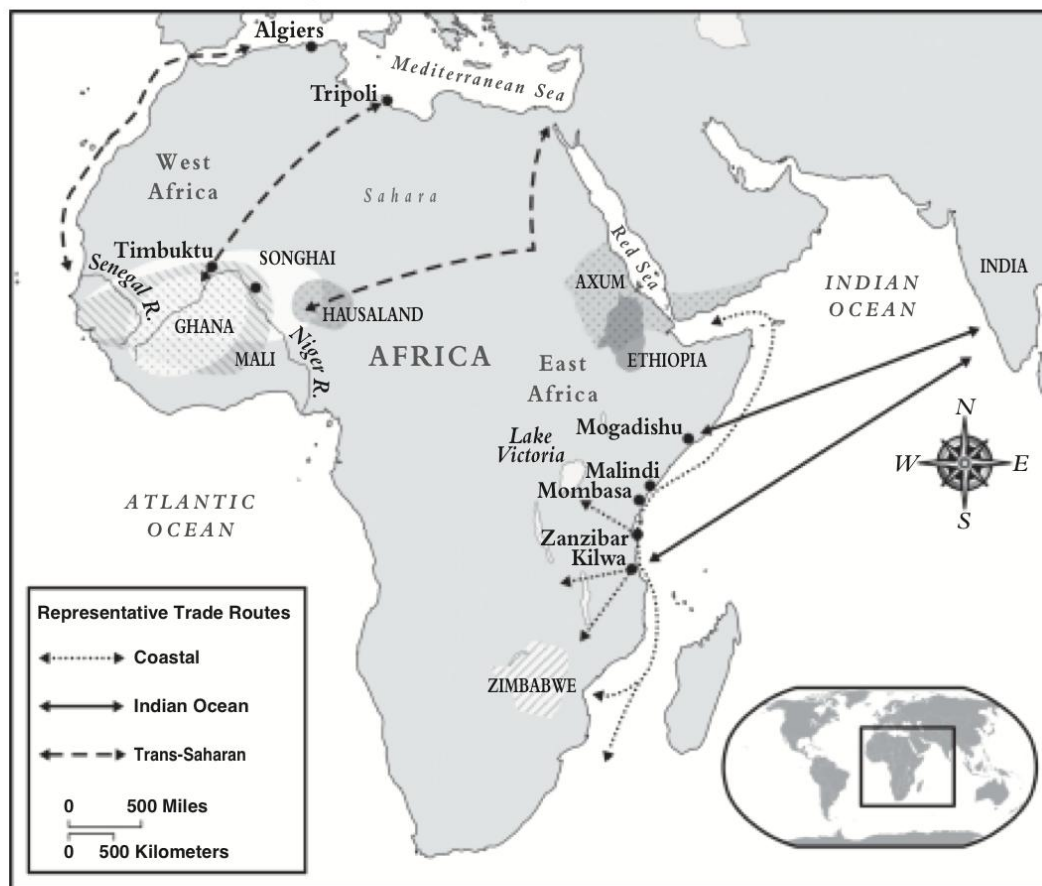
Some parts of Africa resisted Islam. To better defend themselves against attacks by Islamic forces, they built churches with labyrinths, reservoirs, and tunnels. Other parts of the continent, especially in the south, had little contact with Islam until later in history.

Political Structures in Inland Africa

The development of Sub-Saharan Africa was heavily shaped by the migrations of Bantu-speaking people outward from west-central Africa. By the year 1000, most of the region had adopted agriculture. With the sedentary nature of agriculture, people needed more complex political relationships to govern themselves. In contrast to most Asian or European societies, those in Sub-Saharan Africa did not centralize power under one leader or central government. Instead, communities formed **kin-based networks**, where families governed themselves. A male head of the network, a **chief**, mediated conflicts and dealt with neighboring groups. Groups of villages became districts, and a group of chiefs decided among themselves how to solve the district's problems.



Early State-Building and Trade in Africa



As populations grew, kin-based networks became more difficult to govern. Competition among neighbors increased, which in turn increased fighting among villages and districts. Survival for small kin-based communities became more challenging. Though many such communities continued to exist in Sub-Saharan Africa until the 19th century, larger kingdoms grew in prominence, particularly after 1000.

The Hausa Kingdoms Sometime before 1000, in what is now Nigeria, people of the Hausa ethnic group formed seven states, the **Hausa Kingdoms**. The states were loosely connected through kinship ties, though they too had no central authority. People established prospering city-states, each with a speciality. For example, several were situated in plains where cotton grew well.

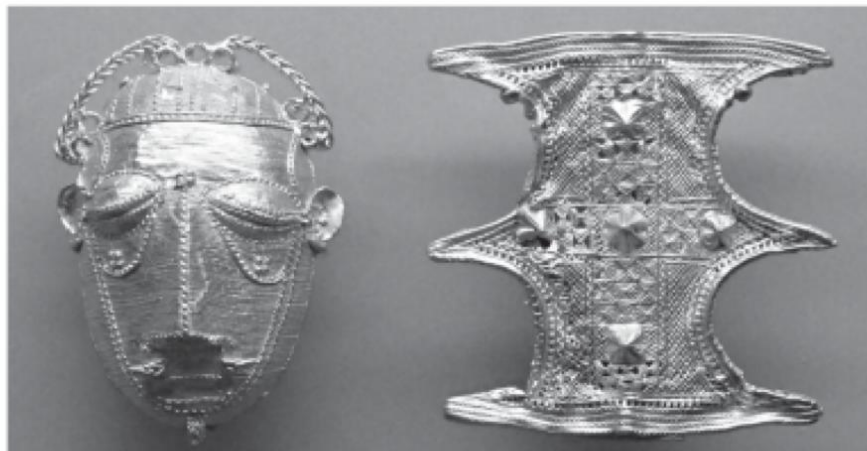
Though the region lacked access to the sea, contact with people from outside the region was important. Many Hausa benefited from the thriving **trans-Saharan trade**, a network of trading routes across the great desert. A state on the western edge of the region specialized in military matters and defended the states against attack. Because the states lacked a central authority, however, they were frequently subject to domination from outside.

In the 14th century, missionaries introduced Islam to the region. (Connect: Write a paragraph contrasting the decentralized political systems of the peoples in inland Africa with those of the Inca. See Topic 1.4.)

Political Structures of West and East Africa

Kingdoms on both the western and eastern sides of Africa benefited from increased trade. The exchange of goods brought them wealth, political power, and cultural diversity. The spread of Islam added to the religious diversity of the continent, where animism and Christianity were already practiced. Four of these kingdoms were Ghana, Mali, Zimbabwe, and Ethiopia.

Ghana Nestled between the Sahara and the tropical rain forests of the West African coast, the kingdom of **Ghana** was not in the same location as the modern nation of Ghana. Historians believe that the kingdom had been founded during the 5th century, at least two centuries before the time of Muhammad, but Ghana reached its peak of influence from the 8th to the 11th centuries. Ghana's rulers sold gold and ivory to Muslim traders in exchange for salt, copper, cloth, and tools. From Ghana's capital city, Koumbi Saleh, the king ruled a centralized government aided by nobles and an army equipped with iron weapons.



Source: Daderot / Wikimedia Commons



Source: Thinkstock

The gold artifacts (upper) were part of the valuable trans-Saharan trade in West Africa. The modern photo of foods and spices (lower) shows the types of goods that have been popular in the Indian Ocean trade in East Africa since the 8th century C.E.

Mali By the 12th century, wars with neighboring societies had permanently weakened the Ghanaian state. In its place arose several new trading societies, the most powerful of which was **Mali**. You will read more about Mali in Topic 2.4. Most scholars believe that Mali's founding ruler, Sundiata, was a Muslim and used his connections with others of his faith to establish trade relationships with North African and Arab merchants. Sundiata cultivated a thriving gold trade in Mali. Under his steady leadership, Mali's wealth grew tremendously. His nephew, Mansa Musa, made a pilgrimage to Mecca where his lavish displays of gold left a lasting impression. (See Topic 2.4 for the later developments in West Africa, such as the growth of the city of Timbuktu and the Songhai Empire.)

Zimbabwe In East Africa, the architecture demonstrated the growing wealth of one kingdom. Though most houses had traditionally been constructed from wood, by the 9th century chiefs had begun to construct their "zimbabwes," the Bantu word for "dwellings," with stone. This word became the name of one of the most powerful of all the East African kingdoms between the 12th and 15th centuries—**Zimbabwe**. It was situated between the Zambezi and Limpopo rivers in modern-day Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

Zimbabwe built its prosperity on a mixture of agriculture, grazing, trade, and, above all, gold. Like Ghana and Mali on the other side of the continent, Zimbabwe had rich gold fields, and taxes on the transport of gold made the kingdom wealthy. While Ghana and Mali relied on land-based trade across the Sahara, Zimbabwe traded with the coastal city-states such as Mombasa, Kilwa, and Mogadishu. Through these ports, Zimbabwe was tied into the **Indian Ocean trade**, which connected East Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, and East Asia. In East Africa, traders blended Bantu and Arabic to develop a new language, **Swahili**. Today, Swahili is spoken by various groups in the African Great Lakes region as well as other parts of Southeast Africa.

The rise and decline of Zimbabwe was reflected in the defensive walls used to protect cities. By the end of the 13th century, a massive wall of stone, 30 feet tall by 15 feet thick, surrounded the capital city, which became known as the **Great Zimbabwe**. The stone wall was the first large one on the continent that people built without mortar. Inside the wall, most of the royal city's buildings were made of stone. In the late 15th century, nearly 20,000 people resided within the Great Zimbabwe. However, overgrazing so damaged the surrounding environment that residents of the bustling capital city abandoned it by the end of the 1400s. The wall still stands in the modern country of Zimbabwe.

Ethiopia Christianity had spread from its origins along the east coast of the Mediterranean Sea south into Egypt and beyond. In what is today **Ethiopia**, the kingdom of Axum developed. It prospered by trading goods obtained from India, Arabia, the Roman Empire, and the interior of Africa. Beginning in the 7th century, the spread of Islam made the region more diverse religiously.

In the 12th century, a new Christian-led kingdom in Ethiopia emerged. Its rulers, like those of other countries, expressed their power through architecture. They ordered the creation of 11 massive churches made entirely of rock.



Source: Thinkstock

This is one of the 11 Christian churches in Ethiopia built out of rock.

Carved rock structures had been a feature of Ethiopian religious architecture since the 2nd millennium B.C.E.

From the 12th through the 16th centuries, Ethiopia was an island of Christianity on the continent of Africa. Separated from both the Roman Catholic Church of western Europe and the Orthodox Church of eastern Europe, Ethiopian Christianity developed independently. People combined their traditional faith traditions, such as ancestor veneration and beliefs in spirits, with Christianity to create a distinct form of faith.

Social Structures of Sub-Saharan Africa

In Sub-Saharan Africa, strong central governments ruling over large territories were uncommon. Instead, Sub-Saharan Africa's small communities were organized around several structures: kinship, age, and gender. Kinship connections allowed people to identify first as members of a clan or family. Age was another significant social marker. An 18-year-old could do more hard labor than a 60-year-old, but younger people often relied on the advice of their elders. Thus, communities divided work according to age, creating age grades or age sets. Finally, gender had an influential role in social organization.

- Men dominated most activities that required a specialized skill. For example, leather tanners and blacksmiths were typically men.



- Women generally engaged in agriculture and food gathering. They also took the primary responsibilities for carrying out domestic chores and raising their family’s children.

Slavery in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southwest Asia Slavery had a long history in Africa. Prisoners of war, debtors, and criminals were often enslaved. Most men and some women did agricultural work. Most women and some men served in households. In many kin-based societies, people could not own land privately, but they could own other people. Owning a large number of enslaved people increased one’s social status. Slavery existed in many forms.

Comparing Three Forms of Slavery			
	Chattel	Domestic	Debt Bondage
Description	Slaves were the legal property of the owner.	Slaves served as cooks, cleaners, or other household workers.	People became slaves, sometimes through mutual agreement, to repay a debt.
Examples	Common in the Americas, 16th century to 19th century	Common in Classical Greece and Rome, and in the Middle East	Common in East Africa before the 15th century and in European colonies in the Americas
Was enslavement permanent?	Yes	Often	Not in theory, although many slaves never regained freedom
Were the children of slaves automatically slaves?	Yes	Often	Children often inherited the debts of their parents
Did slaves have any rights?	No	Some: laws or customs might prevent a master from selling a slave	Some: laws or customs might limit how severely a master could punish a slave

A strong demand in the Middle East for enslaved workers resulted in an **Indian Ocean slave trade** between East Africa and the Middle East. This trade started several centuries before the Atlantic Ocean slave trade between West Africa and the Americas. In some places, it lasted into the 20th century.

The enslaved East Africans, known in Arabic as *zanj*, provided valuable labor on sugar plantations in Mesopotamia. However, between 869 and 883, they and many Arab workers mounted a series of revolts known as the **Zanj Rebellion**. About 15,000 enslaved people successfully captured the city of Basra and held it for ten years before being defeated. The large size and long length of time before it was defeated make the Zanj Rebellion one of the most successful slave revolts in history.



Cultural Life in Sub-Saharan Africa

Playing music, creating visual arts, and telling stories were and continue to be important aspects of cultures everywhere because they provided enjoyment and mark rituals such as weddings and funerals. In Africa, these activities carried additional significance. Because traditional African religions included ancestor veneration, song lyrics provided a means of communicating with the spirit world. African music usually had a distinctive rhythmic pattern, and vocals were interspersed with percussive elements such as handclaps, bells, pots, or gourds.

Visual arts also commonly served a religious purpose. For example, metalworkers created busts of past rulers so that ruling royalty could look to them for guidance. Artists in Benin, West Africa, were famous for their intricate sculptures in iron and bronze. In the late 19th century, the sophistication of these pieces of art would cause some Europeans to increase their respect for West African cultures.

Griots and Griottes Literature, as it existed in Sub-Saharan Africa, was oral. *Griots*, or storytellers, were the conduits of history for a community. Griots possessed encyclopedic knowledge of family lineages and the lives and deeds of great leaders. In general, griots were also adept at music, singing their stories and accompanying themselves on instruments, such as the drums and a 12-string harp called the kora.

The griots were both venerated and feared as they held both the power of language and of story. People said that a griot could sing your success or sing your downfall. By telling and retelling their stories and histories, the griots preserved a people's history and passed that history on from generation to generation. Kings often sought their counsel regarding political matters. When a griot died, it was as though a library had burned.

Just as men served as griots, women served as griottes. They would sing at special occasions, such as before a wedding. For example, the griotte would counsel the bride to not talk back if her mother-in-law abused her or reassure the bride that if things got too bad, she could return home. Griottes provided women with a sense of empowerment in a patriarchal society.

KEY TERMS BY THEME		
SOCIETY: Sub-Saharan kin-based networks Swahili Zanj Rebellion ECONOMY: Trade trans-Saharan trade Indian Ocean trade Indian Ocean slave trade	TECHNOLOGY: Building Great Zimbabwe GOVERNMENT: Kinship chief Hausa Kingdoms	GOVERNMENT: West Africa Ghana Mali GOVERNMENT: East Africa Zimbabwe Ethiopia

Developments in Europe

I should not wish to be Aristotle if this were to separate me from Christ.

—Peter Abelard, Letter 17 to Heloise (1141)

Essential Question How did the beliefs and practices of the predominant religions, agricultural practices, and political decentralization affect European society from c. 1200 to c. 1450?

As the Roman Empire declined in power in the 5th and 6th centuries, Western Europe entered the Middle Ages, sometimes called the medieval period. Throughout Europe, trade declined, intellectual life receded, and the united Roman state was replaced by smaller kingdoms that frequently fought one another for control of territory. In response, European kings, lords, and peasants worked out agreements to provide for common defense. Only the Roman Catholic Church remained powerful in most of Europe from Roman times to the 16th century.

However, between 1000 to 1450, learning and trade began to revive in Europe. This era is called the High Middle Ages. Like many scholars of this period, Peter Abelard studied classical thinkers such as Aristotle and sometimes criticized the Church, but he remained a faithful throughout his life.

Feudalism: Political and Social Systems

European civilization in the Middle Ages was characterized by a decentralized political organization based on a system of exchanges of land for loyalty known as **feudalism**. Lacking a strong government, people needed some protection from bandits, rival lords, and invaders such as the Vikings from northern Europe. The core of feudalism was a system of mutual obligations:

- A monarch, usually a king, granted tracts of land, called *fiefs*, to lords. In return, a lord became a king's *vassal*, a person who owed service to another person of higher status.
- Lords then provided land to knights. In return, knights became vassals of the lord, and pledged to fight for the lord or king.
- Lords also provided land and protection to peasants. In return, peasants were obligated to farm the lord's land and provide the lord with crops and livestock, and to obey the lord's orders.

Feudalism provided some security for peasants, equipment for warriors, and land to those who served a lord. Since the entire system was based on agriculture, wealth was measured in land rather than in cash.

The feudal system incorporated a *code of chivalry*—an unwritten set of rules for conduct focusing on honor, courtesy, and bravery—as a way to resolve disputes. Since women were to be protected, the code put them on a pedestal while not investing them with any significant additional importance. In practice, women did not have many rights. (Connect: Compare European feudalism and Japanese feudalism. See Topic 1.1.)

Manorial System Large fiefs or estates were also referred to as **manors**. The **manorial system** provided economic self-sufficiency and defense. The manor produced everything that people living on it required, limiting the need for trade or contact with outsiders. Many serfs spent their entire lives on a single manor, little aware of events in the rest of Europe.

Manor grounds were small villages that often included a church, a blacksmith shop, a mill, and wine presses. They included the homes of peasants known as **serfs**. Serfs, while not slaves, were tied to the land. This meant they could not travel without permission from their lords. Nor could they marry without their lord's approval. In exchange for protection provided by the lord of the manor, they paid tribute in the form of crops, labor, or, in rare cases, coins. Children born to serfs also became serfs.

As both climate and technology slowly improved, the amount of arable or farmable land gradually increased. Agriculture became more efficient near the end of the Middle Ages. The **three-field system**, in which crops were rotated through three fields, came into use.

- One field was planted with wheat or rye, crops that provided food.
- A second field was planted with legumes such as peas, lentils, or beans. These made the soil more fertile by adding nitrogen to it.
- A third field was allowed to remain fallow, or unused, each year.

Technological developments included windmills and new types of plows. Heavier plows with wheels worked well in the dense soil north of the Alps, while lighter plows worked better in southern Europe. These changes promoted population growth.

Political Trends in the Later Middle Ages

In the later Middle Ages, monarchies grew more powerful at the expense of feudal lords by employing their own bureaucracy and a military. These employees worked directly for the king or queen. (In contrast, in modern countries such as the United States, bureaucrats and soldiers work for the country, not the chief executive.) The lands these monarchs collected under their control, particularly in England and France, were beginning to look like the modern countries of Europe.

Europe in the Middle Ages



France King Philip II (ruled 1180–1223), was the first to develop a real bureaucracy. Yet it was not until Philip IV (ruled 1285–1314) that the first **Estates-General** met. The Estates-General was a body to advise the king that included representatives from each of the three legal classes, or **estates**, in France: the clergy, nobility, and commoners. Although the French kings consulted this Estates-General when necessary, they did not exact regular taxes from the upper two estates, the clergy and nobility. Consequently, the Estates-General had little power. The clergy and nobility felt little responsibility to protect a government that they were not financing, a problem that only continued to increase in France up to the eve of the French Revolution of 1789.

Holy Roman Empire The German king **Otto I** was crowned Holy Roman Emperor in 962, hearkening back to Charlemagne's designation as Emperor of the Romans. Otto's successors survived the power struggle with the papacy over the **lay investiture controversy** of the 11th and 12th centuries. This dispute was over whether a secular (non-religious) leader, rather than the pope, could invest bishops with the symbols of office. It was finally resolved in the Concordat of Worms of 1122, when the Church achieved autonomy from secular authorities. The Holy Roman Empire remained vibrant until it was virtually destroyed during the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). It lingered on, but with little power. The Empire came to a formal end when the French leader Napoleon invaded central Europe in 1806.

Norman England The Normans were descendents of Vikings who settled in northwestern France, a region known as Normandy. In 1066, a Norman king, William the Conqueror, successfully invaded England. This gave him kingdoms on both sides of the English Channel. He presided over a tightly organized feudal system, using royal sheriffs as his administrative officials. The fusion of Normans and Anglo-Saxons created the modern English people.

Many English nobles objected to the power of William and the succeeding Norman monarchs. These nobles forced limits on that power. In 1215, they forced King John to sign the **Magna Carta**, which required the king to respect certain rights, such as the right to a jury trial before a noble could be sentenced to prison. They also won the right to be consulted on the issue of scutage (a tax paid on a knight who wanted to pay money instead of provide military service). Finally, the first **English Parliament** was formed in 1265. These developments increased the rights of the English nobility, but not of the general population.

In the first full parliamentary meeting in 1265, the House of Lords represented the nobles and Church hierarchy, while the House of Commons was made up of elected representatives of wealthy townspeople. Eventually, the power of these two legislative bodies in England became stronger than that of similar bodies on the European continent.

The Hundred Years' War Between 1337 and 1453, the rival monarchies of England and France fought a series of battles known as the Hundred Years' War. English archers armed with longbows (about six feet long) helped win several early victories. However, by the end of the conflict, the English retained only the port of Calais in France. Two other important results of the war were on how people saw themselves and how they fought.

- On each side, serving under a monarch fostered a sense of unity among soldiers who often spoke distinct languages or dialects. The war marked another step towards people identifying themselves as “English” or “French” rather than from a particular region.
- The war also demonstrated the spreading use of gunpowder weapons. Gunpowder had been invented by the Chinese and spread west by Mongols.

Christians versus Muslims In addition to conquering England, the Normans also conquered Sicily, taking control of that Mediterranean island from Muslims. Muslims had conquered Spain in the 8th century. From that time, Christians had wanted to reconquer it. This effort, called the *reconquista*, occurred over many centuries. It was finally completed in 1492.

Roman Catholic Church during the Middle Ages

In 1054, the Christian Church in Europe divided into two branches, a split called the **Great Schism**. The Roman Catholic Church continued to dominate most of Europe for another five centuries, while the Orthodox Church was powerful farther east, from Greece to Russia.

The Roman Catholic Church was the most powerful institution in a Europe divided into hundreds of small political states. Often Church staff were the only people in a community who knew how to read and write. If common people needed something written or read, they asked a Church official to do it. Most manors had a small church and a priest on the grounds. Christianity provided people a shared identity even as vernacular languages, ones spoken by the people in a region, emerged to replace Latin.

Education and Art The Church established the first universities in Europe. Because the Church led in the area of education, most philosophers, writers, and other thinkers of the Middle Ages were religious leaders. All artists worked for the Church. Most artwork focused on religious themes, which provided images to help illiterate serfs understand the Bible.

Church and State The Church held great power in the feudal system. If a lord displeased the Church, it could pressure the lord in various ways. For example, a local bishop might cancel religious services for his serfs. This angered the serfs, who would demand that the lord give in to the bishop.

Like the Roman Empire, the Roman Catholic Church had an extensive hierarchy of regional leaders. The regional religious leaders, called bishops, owed allegiance to the pope, the supreme bishop in Rome. The bishops also selected and supervised local priests.

Monasticism Although some Christian clergy withdrew to monasteries to meditate and pray, they remained part of the economies of Western Europe. The monasteries had the same economic functions of agriculture and protection as other manors. Women were permitted to become nuns and exerted their influence in the monasteries of the Catholic Church.

Reform Although clergy took vows of poverty and supported charities in their communities, the clergy also wielded considerable political influence, and some monasteries became quite wealthy. Wealth and political power led to corruption during the 13th and 14th centuries. Eventually, corruption, as well as theological disagreements, drove reformers such as Martin Luther to take stands that would shatter the unity of the Roman Catholic Church in the 16th century.

Christian Crusades

Just as Europeans fought to drive Muslims out of Sicily and Spain, they also sought to reclaim control of the Holy Land, the region of Palestine in the Middle East that contains sites of spiritual significance to Jews, Christians, and Muslims. European Christians had enjoyed access to these lands for centuries, even after they came under the control of Muslims.

Social and economic trends of the 11th century added to the pressure among Europeans to invade the Middle East. Rules of **primogeniture**, under which the eldest son in a family inherited the entire estate, left a generation of younger sons with little access to wealth and land. The landed nobles saw

a military campaign as a way to divert the ambitions of these restless nobles as well as unemployed peasants, who often pillaged the lands of neighboring lords. Furthermore, merchants desired unfettered access to trade routes through the Middle East. The combination of these religious, social, and economic pressures resulted in the **Crusades**—a series of European military campaigns in the Middle East between 1095 and the 1200s.

Politics shaped the conduct of Crusades. Tensions between popes and kings strengthened the intention of the Roman Catholic Church to take control. The Church also used its spiritual authority to recruit believers. It granted relief from required acts of atonement and penance and even promised people they would reach heaven sooner if they joined a Crusade. Support came for the Orthodox branch of Christianity as well. Alarmed by news of the persecution of Christian pilgrims by Seljuk Turks, the Orthodox patriarch at Constantinople appealed to Pope Urban II to help retake the Holy Land from Islamic control.

The First Crusade Of the four major Crusades, only the first was a clear victory for Christendom. The European army conquered Jerusalem in July 1099. However, Muslim forces under Saladin regained control of Jerusalem in 1187. The Crusades did promote cultural exchange between Europe and the Middle East. The Middle East had a higher standard of living, and European Crusaders increased the demand for Middle Eastern goods. (Connect: Create a timeline tracing the spread of Islam up through the Crusades. See Topic 1.2.)

The Fourth Crusade During the fourth and last major Crusade (1202–1204), Venice, a wealthy city-state in northern Italy, had a contract to transport Crusaders to the Middle East, an area known as the Levant. However, Venice was not paid all of what was due, so the Venetians persuaded the Crusader debtors first to sack Zara, an Italian city, and then Constantinople, a major trade competitor of Venice. The Fourth Crusade never made it to the Holy Land. Eventually, Islamic forces prevailed in the Levant.

Economic and Social Change

The Crusades were just part of the changes occurring in Europe in the late Middle Ages. Local economic self-sufficiency in Europe gradually gave way to an interest in goods from other European areas and from far-flung ports.

Marco Polo In the late 13th century **Marco Polo**, an Italian native from Venice, visited the court of Kublai Khan in Dadu, modern-day Beijing. Polo's captivating descriptions of the customs of the people he met intrigued Europeans. For example, he described how Mongols had multiple marriages, drank mare's milk, burned black stones (coal) to heat their homes, and bathed frequently—often three times per week. Curiosity about Asia skyrocketed, stimulating interest in cartography, or mapmaking.

Social Change Growth in long-distance commerce changed the social pyramid of Western Europe. Economic success started to rival religious vocation or military service in winning status. This middle class, between the

elite nobles and clergy and the mass of peasants, began to grow. Known as the **bourgeoisie**, or **burghers**, it included shopkeepers, merchants, craftspeople, and small landholders.

Urban Growth With renewed commerce came larger cities. The change to the three-field system and other advances in agriculture led to population growth in the late Middle Ages. This agricultural surplus encouraged the growth of towns and of markets that could operate more frequently than just on holidays. As the demand for more labor on the manors increased, the supply decreased. A series of severe plagues swept through Eurasia in the 14th century. In Europe, an outbreak of bubonic plague known as the Black Death killed as many as one-third of the population. The growing demand for labor and the deaths of so many people gave serfs more bargaining power with lords.

Urban growth was hampered after about 1300 by a five-century cooling of the climate known as the **Little Ice Age**. Lower temperatures reduced agricultural productivity, so people had less to trade and cities grew more slowly. The Little Ice Age led to an increase in disease and an increase in unemployment. These, in turn, created social unrest. The crime rate increased, and Jews, and other groups that already faced discrimination, were the victims of scapegoating—being blamed for something over which they had no control.

Jews During the Middle Ages, the small Jewish population in Christian Europe began to grow. Many Jews lived in Muslim areas in the Iberian Peninsula (present-day Spain and Portugal) and around the Mediterranean Sea when these areas were overtaken by European Christians. In time, Jews who could afford to moved northward in Europe. Some political leaders, particularly in Amsterdam and other commercial cities, welcomed them, since they brought valuable experience in business and trade.

The Roman Catholic Church also had a policy that Christians could not charge interest on loans to other Christians. However, Jews were not bound by this restriction. With few other economic opportunities, many northern European Jews became moneylenders. The resulting increase in the flow of money contributed to the economic growth of Europe.

However, anti-Jewish sentiment, or **antisemitism**, was widespread among Christians. They thought of Jews as outsiders and untrustworthy. Jews were expelled from England in 1290, France in 1394, Spain in 1492, and Portugal in 1497, as well as from various independent kingdoms and cities in northern and central Europe. Jews expelled from western and central Europe often moved to eastern Europe. While Jews had lived in this region since the 1st century, their numbers increased greatly because of the expulsions.

Muslims Like Jews, Muslims faced discrimination in Europe. In 1492, the Spanish king expelled the remaining Muslims in the kingdom who would not convert to Christianity. Many Muslims moved to southeastern Europe. In the 13th century, the Muslim Ottoman Empire expanded its reach from Turkey into the Balkan countries of present-day Albania, Kosovo, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. These countries developed large Muslim populations.

While Europe was predominantly Christian, and despite their persecution, both Jews and Muslims helped shape society. Unlike most people in Europe in the Middle Ages, Jews lived in urban areas, and they served as a bridge between Christians and the Muslims whose goods they desired in trade. Contacts with traders in Muslim caliphates opened up a world of trade and a world of ideas for Europeans who had long been self-sufficient and isolated under feudalism.

Gender Roles Women found their rights eroding as a wave of patriarchal thinking and writing accompanied the movement from an agricultural society to a more urban one. Even fewer women than men received an education, although women often managed manor accounts. One place where women had greater opportunities to display their skills in administration and leadership was in religious orders. Some women became artisans and members of guilds—associations of craftspeople and merchants—although not all had property rights. Women in Islamic societies tended to enjoy higher levels of equality, particularly in parts of Africa and Southeast Asia.

Renaissance

The expansion of trade, the growth of an agricultural surplus, and the rise of a middle class able to patronize artists sparked great creativity in Europe. The **Renaissance** was a period characterized by a revival of interest in classical Greek and Roman literature, art, culture, and civic virtue. Scholars recovered and studied decaying manuscripts that had been written many centuries earlier. Developed in 1439, Johannes Gutenberg's movable-type printing press initiated a revolution in print technology. The printing press allowed manuscripts to be mass-produced at relatively affordable costs. It fostered a growth in literacy and the rapid spread of ideas.

One characteristic of the Renaissance was the interest in **humanism**, the focus on individuals rather than God. Humanists sought education and reform. They began to write secular literature. Cultural changes in the Renaissance, such as the increased use of the vernacular language, propelled the rise of powerful monarchies, the centralization of governments, and the birth of nationalism. (Connect: List three elements of classical Greece and Rome revived by the Renaissance. See Prologue.)

Southern Renaissance In the regions of Italy and Spain, church patronage supported the Renaissance. For example, the writer Dante Alighieri (1265–1321) used a religious framework for *The Divine Comedy*, which features hell, purgatory, and heaven. Nevertheless, his fearlessness in criticizing corrupt religious officials and his willingness to use Italian vernacular instead of Latin reflected his independence from the Roman Catholic Church. Wealthy families, such as the Medicis of Florence, used their money to support painters, sculptors, and architects.

Northern Renaissance By 1400, the Renaissance spirit spread to northern Europe. While many Renaissance artists emphasized piety in their work, others

emphasized human concerns. Geoffrey Chaucer, writing in *The Canterbury Tales* in the late 1300s, portrayed a microcosm of middle-class occupations in England, including several Church positions. His satirical writings portrayed monks who loved hunting and overly sentimental nuns. Like Dante a century earlier, Chaucer chose a vernacular, Middle English, for this work, although many of his other writings were in Latin.



The Origins of Russia

During the late Middle Ages in Eastern Europe, extensive trade in furs, fish, and grain connected people from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean to Central Asia. The city-state at the center of this trade was Kievan Rus, based in what is today Kiev, Ukraine. Because it adopted the Orthodox Christianity, it maintained closer cultural relationships with Byzantium than with Roman Catholic Europe. In the 13th century, the Mongols overtook this region, so it developed even more separately from the rest of Europe. (See Topic 2.2.)

The Mongols required local nobles to collect taxes for them. As these nobles grew wealthy in their role, they began to resist Mongol rule. In the late 15th century, under the leadership of a Moscow-based ruler known as Ivan the Great, the region became independent of the Mongols. This marked the beginning of the modern state of Russia.



KEY TERMS BY THEME

GOVERNMENT: England

Magna Carta

English Parliament

ECONOMY: Self-sufficiency

manors

manorial system

TECHNOLOGY: England

three-field system

SOCIETY: Hierarchies

feudalism

serfs

primogeniture

bourgeoisie

burghers

GOVERNMENT: France

Estates-General

estates

GOVERNMENT: Holy

Roman Empire

Otto I

CULTURE: Ideas

Crusades

Marco Polo

Renaissance

humanism

CULTURE: Religion

lay investiture

controversy

Great Schism

antisemitism

ENVIRONMENT:

Climate

Little Ice Age

Comparison in the Period from c. 1200 to c. 1450

The world is divided into men who have wit and no religion and men who have religion and no wit.

— Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna) (980–1037), Persian philosopher and physician

Essential Question: In what ways was the process of state-building in various parts of the world between c. 1200 and c. 1450 similar and different?

Between c. 1200 and c. 1450, states in core areas of civilization grew larger while smaller states declined. In this way, much of the world followed the same trend of building more centralized, more powerful states. However, the process varied from place to place. In most of Asia, the military strength of the Mongols created the largest land-based empire in world history. In West Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia, the religion of Islam was a key part of state-building. In Europe, trade, both internal and with the more advanced civilizations of the Middle East, had greater impact.

State-Building and New Empires

As stronger, more centralized states rose, the influence of nomadic societies began to wane by the 15th century. During this period, new empires emerged and states around the world expanded.

- The Song Dynasty in China continued a long period of technological and cultural progress.
- The Abbasid Caliphate in the Middle East was fragmented by invaders and shifts in trade. Following it, new Muslim states arose in Africa, the Middle East, and Spain.
- In South and Southeast Asia, the Chola Kingdom and Vijayanagar Empire used trade to build strong states, while the Delhi Sultanate in northern India was more land-based.
- In Africa, the rulers of Mali created an empire that was bigger and more centrally administered than the Empire of Ghana that preceded it.
- In the Americas, the Aztecs formed a tributary empire in Mesoamerica that relied on a strong military. The Inca Empire in the Andean region

used the elaborate mit'a system as a way to support state-building. In contrast, most of the Americas lacked centralized states.

- In Europe, feudal ties declined in importance as centralized states developed. This development was clearer in the Western European kingdoms of England and France than in Eastern Europe.
- Japan, unlike most states, became more decentralized and feudal.

The Role of Religion in State-Building

One similarity in much of the world was that religion was a vital part of state-building. To help unite a diverse population, empires and states often turned to religion to strengthen political control over their territory. One excellent example of how religion worked with state-building was in the Islamic world. Through the unifying power of shared beliefs and a use of the common language of Arabic, Islam provided the basis for the legitimacy of rulers from West Africa to Southeast Asia.

China and East Asia Other states also were strengthened by religion. In China, the Confucian belief system was closely tied to civil service. The Song Dynasty relied on Confucian scholars to run a powerful, enduring bureaucracy. No other state had such a well-established and extensive system for conducting government affairs across such a large territory. The ability to implement laws and carry out imperial edicts was a key part of state-building in China.

Neo-Confucianism (see Topic 1.1) spread to Korea and Japan, allowing rulers in these East Asian regions to justify and consolidate their political power as well. Similarly, rulers in South and Southeast Asia relied on Hinduism and Buddhism to aid them in strengthening their states.

Europe In Europe, the relationship between Roman Catholic Church and state-building was somewhat different than in most of Eurasia. At times, the Church was part of the state-building process. However, because European states were so weak for most of the Middle Ages, the Church had provided an alternative structure for organizing society. Then, between 1200 and 1450, as more powerful states emerged in France and the Holy Roman Empire, the Church sometimes became a rival power.

Diffusion of Religion The spread of major religions during this time period resulted in the influence of religion over wide areas. Islam, Buddhism, and Christianity all encouraged their followers to convert non-believers. Therefore, missionary activity was an important factor in the decline in the practice of local religions in places such as Sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, and East Asia. In South Asia, converts to Islam increased partly as a result of military invasions by Islamic armies from Central Asia. However, Hinduism remained the predominant religion in South Asia, setting the stage for intermittent periods of conflict and tolerance between followers of Islam and Hinduism on the sub-continent. Trade networks in the Indian Ocean,

South China Sea, East and Central Asia, and across the Sahara Desert helped to spread religions as commercial activity increased.

State-Building Through Trade

Fueled by increased trade, cross-cultural exchanges of technology and innovation increased. Innovations in crop production, such as Champa rice that spread from Vietnam to China, helped the Song Dynasty feed and sustain a growing population. The resulting effect, a larger and more urban citizenry, supported the development of China's manufacturing capability—the largest in the world at the time. Porcelain, silk, steel, and iron production all increased during this time. Together, these changes built the Song into the strongest state in China since the time of the Han a millennium earlier.

Paper manufacturing, invented in China in the 2nd century B.C.E., made its way across Eurasia, reaching Europe around the 13th century. The resulting printed material led to increased literacy rates across Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa. The focus on intellectual thought and learning led to advances in mathematics and medicine, especially in Islamic centers of learning such as the House of Wisdom in Bagdad.

Europe benefited from exchanges with the Middle East, and through it with the rest of Asia. Not all contact between Europe and Asia was peaceful. Muslims had conquered Spain by force in the 8th century and Christian crusaders attempted to seize lands they considered holy in the Middle East beginning around 1100. The Mongols fostered the transfer of knowledge, but only after they carried out brutal conquests. All of these contacts with Asia contributed to state-building in Europe. Between 1200 and 1450, the process was small and slow, held back by the manorial system and serfdom, but it was noticeable. After 1450, state-building would increase in speed and significance in Europe.

The Impact of Nomadic Peoples

Nomadic peoples played a key role in the process of state building between c. 1200 and 1450. The Mongols, a pastoral people from the steppes of Central Asia, ruled over significant areas of Asia and Eastern Europe during the 13th century. (For more on the Mongols, see Topic 2.2.) The political stability resulting from Mongol dominance allowed trade across Eurasia to greatly expand. Cross-cultural interactions and transfers intensified and some of the first direct contacts between Europe and China since the classical period occurred, also facilitated by Mongol rule.

Similar to the Mongols, Turkish peoples, also from the Central Asian steppes, increased their dominance over large land-based empires in the eastern Mediterranean, Persia, and South Asia that lasted well past 1450. However, unlike the Mongols, who built their empire initially as a coordinated campaign by unified Mongol clans, different Turkish groups built separate empires. The Seljuk and Ottoman Turks became dominant

forces in the Mediterranean region while another Turkish group established an empire located in Persia and the surrounding territories.

The creation of these empires would be among the last major impacts of the interaction between settled and nomadic peoples. The role of nomads in commerce and cross-cultural exchange diminished as they were replaced by organized groups of merchants and trading companies.

Patriarchy and Religion

Social organization in most cultures remained patriarchal. However, cultures varied. While religion often reinforced the power of men, its record was mixed. For example, convent life for Christians in Europe and in Jainist and Buddhist religious communities in South Asia provided women with opportunities for learning and leadership. In contrast, in China, women lost some independence as the custom of foot binding became more common.

Four Types of State-Building, c. 1200–c. 1450		
Processes	Description	Examples
Emergence of New States	States arise in land once controlled by another empire	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mamluk Empire (formerly Abbasid territory)• Seljuk Empire (formerly Abbasid territory)• Delhi Sultanate (formerly Gupta territory)
Revival of Former Empires	New leadership continues or rebuilds a previous empire with some innovations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Song Dynasty (based on the Han Dynasty)• Mali Empire (based on the Ghana Kingdom)• Holy Roman Empire (based on the Roman Empire)
Synthesis of Different Traditions	A state adapts foreign ideas to local conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Japan (Chinese and Japanese)• Delhi Sultanate (Islamic and Hindu)• Neo-Confucianism
Expansion in Scope	An existing state expands its influence through conquest, trade, or other means	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aztecs in Mesoamerica• Incas in South America• City-states in East Africa• City-states in Southeast Asia